

# PC ZINE

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to finally destroy Doom?*

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### **Silent Thunder**

The stunning sequel to A10 Tank Killer

### **Top Gun**

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it's in  
the GAME,  
it's in  
the GAME™



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ZONE 5

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# C:\>Cover Disk

HD DISK



This month's enormous demo spans three disks and installs to your hard drive in one directory ready for you to play. Run the <PCZONE> file from your floppy drive to install the demo to your specified directory.

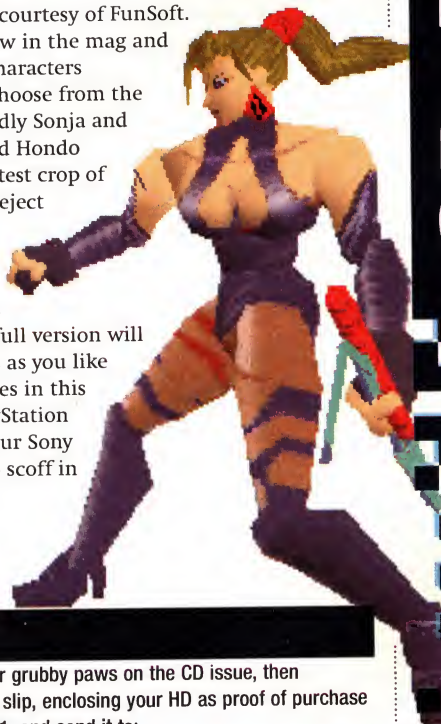
Once the game is sitting comfortably on your hard drive run the <SETUP> file to install the settings for your sound card and then simply type <TSD> to run the game. You can re-define the keys in the set-up screen before the game starts.

## Battle Arena Toshinden (FunSoft)

PlayStation conversions ahoy! 3D fighting games don't get much more impressive than this. Three characters and a full round to play courtesy of FunSoft. Take a look at the preview in the mag and choose from the three characters available in the demo. Choose from the super quick Eiji; the deadly Sonja and her whip of fury, uh! And Hondo who is the last in this latest crop of stick-wielding, Monkey-reject cast members.

You can play against a friend or the computer and the fights last for one round. The full version will support as many rounds as you like plus all the other features in this best seller from the PlayStation stable. No longer will your Sony loving friends be able to scoff in your general direction.

**Controls:** Keyboard  
**Specifications:** 8Mb



## No CD?

If you are unable to get your grubby paws on the CD issue, then fear not! Simply fill out this slip, enclosing your HD as proof of purchase and a cheque for a whole £1, and send it to:

**Miles Tudor, CD Exchange (PCZ37), Electronic Publishing Unit,  
Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover St, London. W1P 7HJ**

**Your Details (Please print clearly):**

Name: .....

Address: .....

Post Code: .....

Please make cheques payable to:

**DENNIS PUBLISHING Ltd.**

CDs from previous issues are also available.

Phone Miles between 10.30am and 5.30pm on: 0171-917 7693

CD-ROM DISC



To access the plethora of orgasmic playable demos on this PC Zone Cover CD change to your CD

ROM drive letter and type <PCZONE>. The menu is simple to use and simply clicking on the icon of the demo you want to run with the left mouse button will launch the installer for it automatically. Just follow the on-screen instructions. Windows 95 users should follow the same procedure but from the DOS prompt.

To access the Windows programs and demos please launch the <BROWSER> file from Windows Explorer or File manager and double click the required program, utility or demo to install or run it.

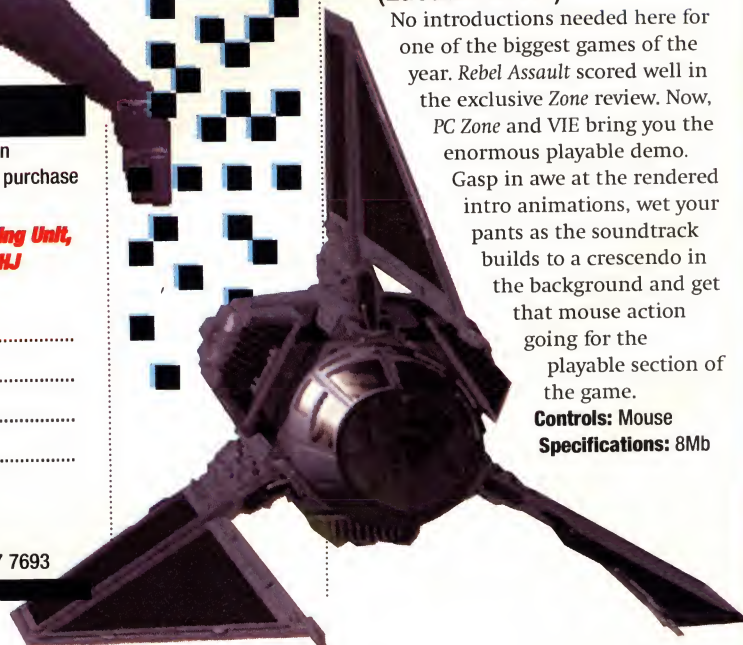
## PLAYABLE DEMOS

### Rebel Assault 2 (LucasArts/VIE)

No introductions needed here for one of the biggest games of the year. Rebel Assault scored well in the exclusive Zone review. Now, PC Zone and VIE bring you the enormous playable demo.

Gasp in awe at the rendered intro animations, wet your pants as the soundtrack builds to a crescendo in the background and get that mouse action going for the playable section of the game.

**Controls:** Mouse  
**Specifications:** 8Mb







## Descent 2 (Interplay)

the most original name for a sequel they, who cares? To tie in with this month's cover and review we also bring you the huge playable, full shareware version of the game. Tons of new features and additions including robots and Guardbots with enhanced AI make it even harder than the first. For the beginner and expert alike there is also a new feature: the Guidebot. Follow this little chap around the mines as it directs you to the essential areas and points littered across the levels. Get the word down in the mag.

**Controls:** Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick  
**Specifications:** 8Mb

## Command and Conquer (VIE)

Fight! Win! Prevail! Yet another massively playable game that needs no introduction. The biggest game of 1995, over half a million sales in Europe alone; speaks for itself really. Plenty of Commanding and Conquering in Westwood's massive three level demo plus some of the mind blowing animations. Use the mouse to guide your troops and units across the hazardous landscapes in search of the enemy and the ultimate goal: Victory!

**Controls:** Mouse, Keyboard  
**Specifications:** 8Mb

## Warcraft 2 (Blizzard)

Orcs and Humans slugging it out to the death with swords, magical weapons and ships. Blizzard have produced this six level, full shareware version of their latest fantasy conquest game. There are six unique levels to get your teeth stuck in to, and most of the in-game characters and units too. To go hand in hand with this shareware version of the game is the shareware edition of Blizzard's Warcraft 2's level creator/editor that runs in Windows.

**Controls:** Mouse, Keyboard  
**Specifications:** 8Mb

(Above left) *Descent 2* is this month's cover girl and there's a splendid playable demo on the CD too!

(Above right) *Earthworm Jim* is on the PC... and in two different incarnations at once. Woah.

(Below right) *Warcraft 2* is like *Command & Conquer* with orcs and goblins. We've got a fantastic editor for it as well.

## Warcraft 2 Level Editor (Blizzard)

Design and build your own levels in this shareware version of Blizzard's superb level editor for Windows. The editor automatically detects the shareware version of the game which means you can play around with and create levels using the version of the game on the disc. The full version of the game comes complete with a fully functional editor.

**Controls:** Mouse, Keyboard  
**Specifications:** 8Mb, Windows

## Earthworm Jim 1 and 2 (FunSoft)

One of the craziest platform characters to grace the consoles: *Earthworm Jim* has arrived on the PC at last. Two playable demos of Jim's new PC exploits. Guide the slimy hero across the treacherous landscapes whipping anything that gets in your way with Jim's head and blasting them with his laser pistol. Sounds weird? That's because it is.

**Controls:** Keyboard, Joystick, Joypad  
**Specifications:** 8Mb



## Help!

Is the CD playing up? Is the HD stuck in the drive? Is your PC driving you nuts? Well panic no longer, because help is at hand in the form of Miles Tudor. Just pick up the phone and call one of these two numbers:

**0171-917 7693**

or

**0171-917 7692**

Lines are open between  
10.30am and 5.30 pm  
Monday - Friday

If you are calling either help line, please take note of the following points:

- Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call to jot down any relevant info.
- Have as much relevant information to hand as possible, ie system spec, amount of ram and base memory in your machine etc. Also remember the nature of the fault and which month's issue the CD or disk came from.
- Ideally you should have your PC running and at hand when you call.







## Battle Arena Toshinden (FunSoft)

Please refer to the description on the Floppy Disk section of these pages.

**Controls:** Keyboard, Joystick, Joypad  
**Specifications:** 8Mb

## Bullfrog Sampler (EA)

Those splendid chaps and chapettes at Bullfrog gave us this excellent disc full to the brim with previews of some of the most long awaited titles for a long time. *Creation*, which has a splendid rendered intro sequence followed by a brief playable section where you guide the submarine craft along the ocean floor. *Dungeon Keeper*, which is a rolling demo of all aspects of the soon to be released 'RPG with a difference'. Parts of the intro, and gameplay have been included for your perusal. Finally, both *Theme Hospital* and *Syndicate Wars* which are both rolling demos that demonstrate the new game engines extensively.

**Controls:** Mouse  
**Specifications:** 8Mb

## PGA Tour Golf 96 (EA)

EA's latest foray into the golf world with latest chapter in the incredible EA Sports range. This demo illustrates the splendid production, incredible sound effects and multimedia presentation of the product along with an extensive playable section from one of the game's courses.

**Controls:** Mouse, Keyboard  
**Specifications:** 8Mb

## Fantasy General (Mindscape)

SSI's successful *Panzer General* engine is reborn as a Lord of the Rings style war game where fantasy beasts and warlords battle it out to the death! This is a seriously in-depth strategic nightmare

(Below) *Silent Thunder* is the follow up to *A10 Tank Killer* and boasts some of the most impressive flight sim graphics around.



## Tech specs

Unless otherwise indicated the standard systems requirements for this month's software are as follows:

**Memory:** 8Mb

**Processor:** 486DX2/66

**Graphics:** VGA, SVGA

**Sound:** SoundBlaster and compatibles

for action fans but RPG fans and strategy heads should find hours of enjoyment.

**Controls:** Mouse  
**Specifications:** 8Mb

## Virtual Karts (MicroProse)

Whizzing around the road circuits guide your Grand Prix Kart to victory in this playable demo from MicroProse. Use the mouse to navigate the demo circuit and try to set the fastest lap time.

**Controls:** Mouse  
**Specifications:** 8Mb

## Silent Thunder (Sierra)

Enormous playable demo on the horizon! *Silent Thunder* is the latest combat sim from Sierra (running under Win 95 only we're afraid) and the follow-up to the immensely popular and now incredibly old *A10 Tank Killer*. Check out our blueprint on page 36 for more information.

**Controls:** Keyboard, Mouse  
**Specifications:** Windows 95, 8Mb

## Renegade 2 (Mindscape)

Mindscape's sequel to the very successful space/strategy blaster. Take control of your ship and kill anything vaguely alien that moves. Set-up your joystick for the best results and keep your eyes on that radar.

**Controls:** Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick

## Speed Haste (Shareware)

Superb shareware version of one of the best 3D arcade racers we've had the pleasure to play recently. Choose F1 or Stock Car class and play this incredible arcade racing sim over two full circuits with a choice of two different cars. Watch out for the full registered version to be released by EA very soon (see news item).

**Controls:** Keyboard, Joystick  
**Specifications:** 4Mb

## Culky (Old Culkus)

Old Culkus here isn't it? Painting pictures of his mum doesn't he? Tries to sell it to the National Gallery for £40 doesn't he? Doesn't have much success so tries to flog it to



everyone he meets travelling around the capital. Oh what the hell, watch the video yourself and you try and make head or tail of what's going on.

**Note:** Runs under Windows and requires Video for Windows which is also supplied on the CD.

## UTILITIES

### Essentials

As always we've gathered together the essential utilities to make life that little bit easier.

**Graphic Workshop for Windows:** Image viewing and file conversion.

**Winzip 6.0:** Essential Windows front end for archiving files.

**Winzip 95 6.0:** As above for Windows 95 users.

**Paint Shop Pro 3.11:** Image editing and retouching.

**QuickTime for Windows 2.03:** View movies on your PC.

**Video for Windows 1.1:** View .avi files with ease.

**McAfee Anti-Virus:** Shareware virus protection.

**McAfee Anti-Virus 95:** Virus protection for Windows 95 users.

**Win32:** 32-bit extensions for Windows 3.1 users.

**WinG:** Microsoft's graphic engine for Windows 3.1 users.

**Direct X:** The runtime version of the Windows 95 drivers you need to get the optimum performance from all the current software being written exclusively for the Windows 95 desktop.

**Paint Shop Pro 3.12 '95:** The ultimate shareware graphics package. This is the new 32-bit version for Windows 95.

### On-Line applications

**VossNet:** At least a week's free access to the Internet. This is the software you need to get on-line.

**Ameol:** Get on-line to CIX with the best off-line reader around.

**Ameol 95:** As above, but for Windows 95 users.

**WebEdit:** HTML editor for anybody wanting to set a home page.

**HotMetal:** And another one!

**Microsoft Internet Access:** And another one

too! (for Word 6)

**Internet Decoding Application:** UU, MIME, SHIP and BTOA Encoding/decoding. Essential for sending or receiving files over the Internet. **Z**



# WTF IS NORMAL?!



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PC  
CD-ROM



**ABSURDLY CONVINCING MOTION CAPTURE**



Trees made from recycled wood • Slack heels with Goldfish in • Boats made from Alka Seltzer • Naked surfing on Christmas day • Water soup • Bright red snow • Pre-chewed food • Mohair underwear • Cars that tan in the sun



# BULLETIN

## EURO 96

**G**REMLIN INTERACTIVE HAS recently made two major announcements concerning the follow-up to the highly rated *Actua Soccer*. PC Zone has known for some time that a sequel has been on the cards, but details about the game have now been confirmed.

The first, and most important detail is that *Actua 2* has gained the official Euro 96 licence (Euro 96 of course, is the first major football event to take place in the UK since the 1966 World Cup). The game will be updated accordingly, and a number of enhancements and bug fixes will be made.

All of the participating teams have been included, as have all eight of the grounds used in the tournament so that all

matches can be accurately reproduced.

Gremlin is keen to stress that the AI has been given a thorough reworking since *Actua Soccer*, and it's now understood that all of the teams play like their real-life counterparts. On top of this we now get 'proper' injuries as well as the correct FIFA rulings such as 'golden goal' and disciplinary points for players that have been sent off.

The second major announcement concerning the game deals with the fact that it has been chosen by BT to spearhead the launch of its new multi-player game service *Wireplay*.

Trials of the service have already begun, but the official launch should coincide with that of Euro 96 in the summer.

Watch out next month for an exclusive preview on the what will undoubtedly be the greatest soccer game of the year.



BY THE WAY

## POWERVR

**3**D accelerators are certainly responsible for a burgeoning sector of PC hardware at the moment, and it has been something that *PC Zone* has been keeping a very close eye on. 3D, polygon-based games are quite clearly the way forward for videogames and any hardware that makes these things better has to be good. The only problem so far is that a 'standard' has yet to be established.

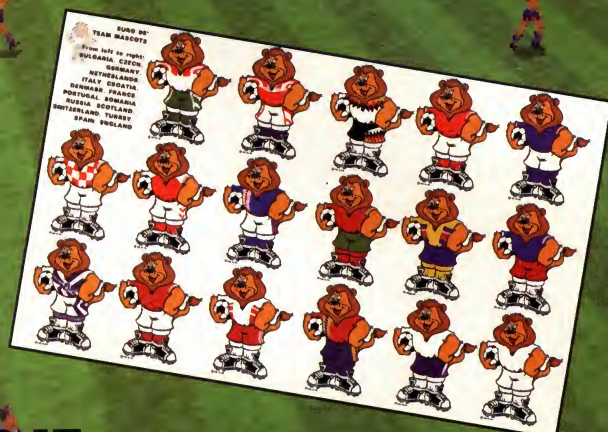
With the introduction of Direct3D, Microsoft is hoping to get everyone under the same software development 'umbrella', but as far as hardware goes, nothing has really cut the mustard as far as both price and performance are concerned. Until now...

Video card manufacturer VideoLogic and NEC (the second largest chip manufacturer after Intel) have teamed up to create the PowerVR chip set which is capable of producing 250,000-1,000,000 polygons a second in 24-bit colour at 640x480 (that's significantly faster than either the PlayStation or the forthcoming Nintendo 64). The board has been designed to work with PCI P90 and above PCs and is possibly one of the most significant hardware add-ons announced this year. Unfortunately it's designed to speed up machines that are already pretty quick to start with (unlike the 3D Blaster which is eminently VESA 486 friendly) so it's only really that good if you completely believe the current philosophy that P100s are entry-level (so that's hardly any of us).

What is good news though is that there are some pretty cool looking games being developed specifically for the PowerVR system include Namco's *Rave Racer*, *Air Combat* and most impressively *Tekken*. Other developers signed up to work on the system including Gremlin and Psygnosis, although specific titles are yet to be confirmed.

**FULL TIME RESULTS**

| TURKEY |                 | CROATIA |  |
|--------|-----------------|---------|--|
| 15     | SHOTS           | 18      |  |
| 6      | SHOTS ON TARGET | 9       |  |
| 45%    | POSSESSION      | 55%     |  |
| 3      | BOOKINGS        | 1       |  |
| 1      | SENDING OFFS    | 0       |  |
| 1      | GOALS           | 3       |  |






**PEACE HAS A PRICE...**



# DEFCON 5



**AVAILABLE ON PC CD-ROM**

 GT Interactive Software  
(Europe) Ltd.

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**MILLENNIUM**  **INTERACTIVE**



## Dispatches

### +++ S.T.O.R.M.

The 2D backlash is already happening. As well as *Abuse* Electronic Arts have also just announced details of *STORM* (Submersible Tactical Operational Reconnaissance Module), a side-scrolling action/adventure set underwater.

*STORM* also features lush SVGA graphics, but unlike *Abuse*, as well as shooting things sideways on, players also get to shoot things from a 3D first-person perspective and solve various puzzles.

In many ways *STORM* can be compared to a sedate sub-aqua version of the old arcade classic *Scramble* played at the wrong speed in the bath. If it's fast and furious action you're after then you're in for a bit of a shock; however, we should at least point out that *STORM* will come on three CDs and features 'Award winning underwater cinematics'. It would in fact make a lovely screensaver 'cos it's so relaxing to watch.

*STORM* is due for release in April.

### +++ Feather Mouse

Phase 9 (the makers of that six-button gamepad) have just brought out a rather nice new mouse powered by a FEATHERtec engine. In case you didn't know, this means that it uses revolutionary new mouse technology that is fine-tuned to offer 'feather-like shaft spinning'. Apparently, this not only makes it incredibly lightweight (it's supposedly the lightest mouse in the world), but offers unprecedented finger tip control and superb accuracy. It's fully Windows and DOS compatible and 'Double Click' compatible. Contact Euromax Electronics on 01262 601006 for further details.

### +++ Magic The Gathering

The card craze that's been sweeping the States for the past 12 months is about to hit the UK big time, thanks to the launch of *Magic The Gathering* from MicroProse. The game, which is a sort of *Top Trumps* meets *D&D*, has been converted into a PC format and allows players to access hundreds of cards and instantly put together their own 'pack' - a feat which would take weeks and a fair bit of cash using the cards. The game, which is due for release in May/June, also features an on-line help facility (the game can get quite complicated) and enables players to learn and test tactics before playing with other 'real' players. For further information contact MicroProse on 01454 326532 and look out for a full preview next month.



# Mission Force: CyberStorm

FANS OF THE HIT STOMP-FEST METALTECH: EARTHSIEGE RELEASED by Sierra last year will be doubly glad to hear that *Earthsiege 2* is very, very imminent and that a new strategy game based on the Metaltech universe is also due for release in the next couple of months.

*Mission Force: CyberStorm* is a hi-res strategy game in the UFO mould based on hi-tech HERC warfare. Players must take

control of their very own futuristic fighting force, manipulate and design their own HERCS, come up with a successful strategy and then go and kick seven shades of shit out of the evil Cybrid menace (who, incidentally, are hell-bent on completely wiping out the human race... you know, the usual stuff).

As well as crisp SVGA graphics, 25 fully-customisable HERCS and a super whizzo clever AI, the game will also feature a random multi-level terrain and mission generator which will be capable of producing unlimited levels for you to battle it out on.

*Mission Force: CyberStorm* will also support multi-player network play and will be both Windows 95 and Windows 3.1 compatible. No firm release date is set as yet.



## EuroManager 96

There's still a chance that Matt Le Tissier will be included in the England squad ready for Euro 96 - if he gets his hands on *EuroManager 96*, the statistastic new footie management sim from Ocean.

Boasting over 500 teams from 16 European countries and detailed stats on more than 12,000 players, it could well be the game to knock *Championship Manager 2* off the coveted 'Best Management Game Ever' perch.

As well as all the normal features (full league and cup competitions, club history, accurate, up to date player stats and numerous tactical options) *EuroManager 96* also features a unique 'short game' option, whereby a player takes control of a certain team, for example Newcastle, and then attempts to emulate or even better the manager's (ie Keegan's) performance in a given time period. Over 20 of these mini-scenarios will be included in the final game, ranging from easy (winning the league with Manchester United) to down right bloody difficult (keeping Bolton in the Premier League).

Other innovative features worthy of a mention are a 'Sensible Behaviour' monitor that prevents anything silly from happening within the game (ie Spurs selling Dumitrescu and buying Andy Sinton) and the promise that a "fully interactive" on-line version will follow on shortly after the original is released in May. There's no news on a celeb being lined up to do the commentary as yet, but let's hope it's not Andy Gray eh?







## Hind

Following on from their success with *Apache Longbow*, Digital Integration are working on another helicopter sim. *Hind* gives you the opportunity to jump inside a Russian chopper and kick the shit out of Korean and Pakistani types over various scenarios. Unlike the Apache, the Hind is a multi-purpose helicopter which can hold its own in air-to-air combat, and also transport troops to the thick of the action, provide armoured support, and deploy special forces. The downside of using the Hind as a troop carrier is that it's obviously not as agile as the Apache due to the extra weight it's carrying, but missions that involve delivering troops and deploying personnel add a whole new element to the gameplay. This ultimately makes *Hind* a much more varied and interesting game to play than *Apache Longbow*.

As you would expect from a flight sim, *Hind* is packed choc-a-block with features. It has multiple combat levels (hard for tough guys, easy for wimps), lots of weapons including machine guns, missiles, bombs, rockets and other big boys stuff. The graphics are all very highly detailed, with Gouraud-shaded, texture-mapped terrain and objects.

Fans of *Apache Longbow* will be pleased to know *Hind* is fully networkable with *Apache*, and, providing you've got 16 PCs at home (or a very understanding boss at work), you can have up to 16 players battling it out with each other over a network. This is one of the games major selling points and you can be sure we'll be putting it through its paces on the *Zone* network when the game comes in. *Hind* will hopefully be out late next month. We'll bring you a full review as soon as the game is finished. In the meantime you can contact Digital Integration on 01276 684959 for more information.

(Left) *Hind* has much more advanced graphics than its predecessor.

## Be A WWI Pilot!

As you may or may not know, Rowan have just completed the patch that will turn your original copy of *Dawn Patrol* into an all singin' and dancin' head-to-head extravaganza. It'll be on next month's cover CD - so don't fret about getting your hands on it.

Also, if you've already read the preview on page 21 you'll know that Rowan are currently working on a completely new WWI air combat sim called *Flying Corps*. As well as being potentially fab and completely accurate, the game features around 200 'virtual pilots' who make up the numerous different squadrons, each with their own biog and flight history. If you would like to be one of the 'virtual pilots' and get your chiselled features in the game, all you have to do is send in a photograph of yourself (preferably a headshot) to the address below.

All photos should arrive by 4th April, and cannot be returned.

**Rowan/Flying Corps Selection**  
**Empire Interactive**  
**The Spires**  
**677 High Road**  
**North Finchley**  
**London N12 0DA**

## Dispatches

### +++ Flood at EA

Award-winning producer Flood (who has worked with mega-band U2 amongst others) has been helping the sound people at EA remix the music for numerous forthcoming releases over the past couple of weeks at their new purpose-built studio set up in Slough. No one outside EA has heard anything from the man with the magic touch, but apparently we can expect an official announcement very soon.

### +++ Z-talk

Fed up waiting for Z? So are we, but hey lighten up, you can always *talk* to people about it if you like 'cos the Bitmap Brothers have a brand new website and there's a special section on Z so you can all sound off about the fact that you're absolutely dying to play it. The address is [www.bitmap-brothers.co.uk](http://www.bitmap-brothers.co.uk). If you don't have a modem, you can always phone up Time Warner on 0171-391 4300 and *talk* to them about it instead.

### +++ Psynosis is back

Sony have given Psynosis their name back in the wake of much confusion between the various teams at Sony (they all had names beginning with Sony, see?) so the Liverpool company will once more be flying the flag under their own moniker. At the same time as all this is going on most of the releases Psynosis have planned for the next few months end in 2. *Ecstatica 2*, *Wipeout 2* and even *Destruction Derby 2* are sure to cause mass hysteria when they hit the streets in the next couple of months. For more info on "things that end with 2" phone Psynosis on 0151-282 3000.

### +++ Broken Sword

Revolution, the team behind *Beneath A Steel Sky*, are working on a brand new adventure. *Broken Sword* features cartoon-style rotoscoped animation and while we don't know much about the plot as of yet, it's a fair bet that a broken sword will be involved somewhere down the line. The game has been in development for some time and reportedly has a budget of over a million quid. Perhaps they can spend some of it on getting the sword fixed?







## Dispatches

### +++ Ultima IX nearing completion

Lord British and his cronies have recently made a statement in their CompuServe forum announcing details of the next *Ultima* game. Subtitled *Ascension*, the ninth game in the series is being seen very much as a 'finishing off' exercise and will apparently bring to a close the stories dealt with in all three existing trilogies.

The climax of this game has been hinted at, and from what we can gather it would seem that the Avatar is on the verge of becoming a god... or something.

As far as game style goes, it's thought that *Ascension* will be a return to the real-time elements found in *Ultima VIII: Avatar*, and we know for a fact that some of Bullfrog's light-sourcing routines are being used in the new graphics engine.

No release details have been announced as yet. Watch this space in the coming months.

### +++ Your desktop speaks

Acclaim are releasing a group of utilities to brighten up your desktop. *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Babylon 5*, *Total Recall* and *Terminator* packs all feature voices, wave files and all sorts of stuff from your fave movies. Each pack contains tons of wav files and caused much hysteria in the zone office when they turned up (strange noises, sounds and conversations were blasting from all our PCs in unison and driving everyone else in the building potty). All of these packs are going for a measly £14.99. Call Acclaim on 0171-344 5000.



### +++ Whoops!

In the last issue of *PC Zone* we printed an erroneous website address for Cyberville Radio. We didn't mean to do it, honest, it was an accident and just to prove it here is the completely correct address: [www.computelink.co.uk](http://www.computelink.co.uk).

### +++ ScreenBeat

Logic 3 have designed a set of headphones specifically for use with your PC, The SB 311 has a wide frequency response and with the correct adaptor you can use it with your hi-fi too. You can also get a microphone for it too so you can talk to your PC as well as listen to it (fab eh?). The SB 311 costs £9.99. For more details call Logic 3 on 0181 902 2211.

## Marvel 2099

Mindscape are currently working on a new game that takes advantage of their recently acquired Marvel licence.

Little has been revealed about the project as yet, though *Marvel 2099* is said to be a kind of UFO/Command & Conquer hybrid that has the player assembling his own superhero team and battling it out with another superhero force, controlled by either the computer or another player over a network or serial link. Many of the Marvel Comic characters are in the game already, and to say that they look rather fab on-screen would be like saying that the Incredible Hulk is quite strong.

The game isn't due out until towards the end of the year, but it looks as though Mindscape has secured a license deal that's definitely worth having.



## EA Get Abuse

Electronic Arts have just signed up the arcade action-fest we first told you about several months ago, known as *Abuse*.

Developed by Crack Dot Com and produced by Dave Taylor (the 'author' of *Doom* and *Quake*, no less), *Abuse* is a 360 degree, side-scrolling platform shoot 'em up that sports smoothly scrolling graphics and an eight-way multi-player 'Deathmatch' facility.

The player controls Nick Vrenna, a man falsely imprisoned and tricked into becoming a test case for illegal scientific experiments conducted inside the prison. Apparently, corrupt scientists have been watching too many episodes of the *X Files*, no sorry - corrupt scientists have been trying to isolate the specific gene sequence which causes violence and aggression in humans. This sequence, nicknamed 'Abuse', has been forced into all of the inmates and has caused them to mutate into horrible, slimy cannibals who look more like the monsters from an *Alien* movie than Brian Glover. As Nick appears unaffected by the mysterious mutagen, he is the only one who has even the slimmest chance to get to the control room at the heart of the prison and destroy the Abuse gene sequence.

To top it all off and add to the general fun, *Abuse* also features destructible worlds (ie if you shoot a wall, bits fall off), seven different weapons, and a rather nice level editor, so when you've completed all 23 of the massive levels included with the game you can then toddle off and create your own.

*Abuse* is due for release in March.

## Pinball Construction Kit

Just when you thought that 21st Century were never, ever, ever going to release another pinball game, along comes *Pinball Construction Kit*.

As you might have twigged from the name, *Pinball Construction Kit* is a powerful design utility that allows you to build your very own pinball table, complete with ball bonuses, custom sounds and power-ups.

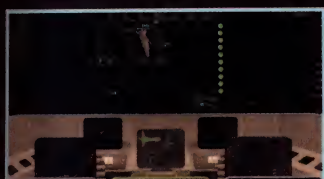
Creating a table is easy, you simply click and drag any number of the various icons onto one of 64 different basic table designs and assign a property to it. Once you've 'built' your table, it can then be saved and constantly tweaked using a comprehensive 'video-playback' facility that lets you check out your table's weak spots and sort out any problem areas. There's even a facility to modify existing tables just to get you started as well as on-line help in case you get stuck.

As if another pinball game wasn't enough, 21st Century are also planning to release *Pinball 3D-VCR*, yet another pinball game that not only sports a built-in video recorder that allows you to play back your finest moments (sound familiar?), but a unique ten multi-ball feature. Tables can be played in 2D or 3D and feature hi-res, ray traced graphics. Both products are due for release in spring/summer.





# BATTLECRUISER 3000AD



TRADING

*'Battlecruiser 3000AD is here and it's fair to say it's better than Elite in every department.'*

94%

PC ATTACK



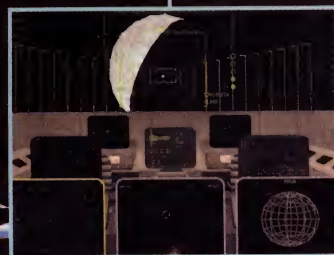
COMBAT

*'It's far more simple to get into than say Frontier Elite II and to be honest it's more rewarding at the end of the day.'*

9  
10

PC REVIEW

STRATEGY



RESOURCE

MANAGEMENT



CREATED BY

**TAKE 2**  
INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE

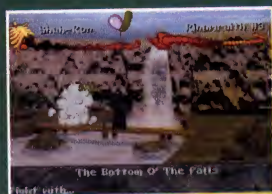
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## PGA European Tour

**B**ACK IN 3D LAND, EA SPORTS (IF IT'S IN THE GAME, it's in the game) have decided to come back to Europe (not anything to do with the recent Ryder Cup win, surely?) and release *PGA European Tour*.

Using similar technology to the fab *PGA Tour 96*, *PGA European Tour* allows the player to pit his finger-clicking skills against some of Europe's finest, including many of the pro's who

played in the recent Ryder Cup victory. Just to make it even more authentic, the development team have filmed each player's swing

against a blue screen, digitised it and included it in the game, so you can see time and time again just how Bernhard Langer (pictured), Jose Marie Olazabal and David Galford actually swing their thing.

*PGA European Tour* also features three new courses (Wentworth, the K Club, Ireland and Hamburg), a full commentary from golf legend Peter Allis and all the revolutionary innovations (such as real-time hole fly-bys, the Target Arc System and TV-style presentation) that made *PGA Tour 96* so damn playable.

Also on the way is a new course disc for the aforementioned *PGA Tour 96* which features the Spanish Bay courses. Whereas *European Tour* is a standalone product, the *Spanish Bay* courses disc will only work when used in conjunction with the original *PGA Tour 96*.

Contact EA Sports on 01753 549442 for further details.

## Get a Gravis GriP

**G**ravis are finally releasing a new gamepad to be sold alongside their brilliant Gravis Gamepad. The Gravis GriP (Gravis Interface Protocol) will be sold in two different packs, the Team Sports Set (which includes a copy of EA's *NHL Hockey 96*) and the Advanced Fighter Machine Pack (which includes Acclaim's *Wrestlemania*).

As well as the game, each pack consists of a main interface port which plugs into the joystick port on your PC and two Saturn-style eight-button digital pads (six independent buttons + two 'shoulder' buttons). Up to four Gravis digital pads can be used simultaneously, and a further two analogue pads can be plugged into the interface box, to save you having to root around at the back of your machine every time you want to use an analogue device.

As well as allowing up to four players to play at the same time through a single port, the Gravis GriP has three different operational modes for fuss free playing. If there's no direct software support written into the game, each pad will operate as a standard four-button pad with the extra two buttons acting as autofire buttons and the 'shoulder' buttons being switchable to operate either as extra A and B buttons, or left and right directional buttons.

The second mode kicks in automatically if you are running a game under Windows 95 (ahem) and allows you to map any key to any button on the pad via a rather neat programming utility (similar to the one that accompanied the Gravis Phoenix joystick) - and it even works if you're running a game through a DOS box. Sample set ups for loads of games (including *Doom*, *Dark Forces* and *Full Throttle*) can also be accessed via a database that is included in the software.

The final mode is for those games that directly support the GriP, which is pretty much every EA Sports title to be released this year, the soon to be released *Resurrection: Rise 2* and all future releases from Virgin Interactive, Microsoft and numerous other games publishers who have all pledged their support.

Each pack comes complete with two gamepads and currently retail Stateside for around \$99 (£TBA) with extra pads going for a mere \$20. Contact Leisuresoft on 01604 768711 for details.

## Vikings: Pirates of the North

**V**ikings: Pirates Of The North from GT Interactive is a new strategy game that puts you in the role of a young Jarl (brave, dashing, Viking-type bloke) whose quest is to become ruler first of Scandinavia and maybe even the whole world. The game is set in 800AD. You are given an army of Vikings and your objective at the outset of the game, in true *Civ* style is to set off exploring and conquering new lands. As you come across new villages and towns you will be given the option to attack them and bring them under your control.

As well as being a fairly standard exploratory strategy game, *Vikings* has RPG elements such as an increase in experience points for any of your units that are successful in battle. You also get to talk to storytellers in taverns who give you exciting quests to go on. The successful completion of quests will boost your experience and perhaps reveal magic items you can use, as is usually the case with these type of games. You can navigate around the world by either walking or, if you have enough loot, you can pop down your local shipyard and buy yourself a nice new ship, which of course makes getting about a lot easier.

What makes *Vikings* different from other games of this type however, is the graphics aren't complete and utter crap, as you can see for yourself from the screen shots. If this game plays as good as it looks, we could all be in for a bit of a treat when it comes out next month. Ring GT Interactive on 0171-258 3791.

## Master Of Orion 2

**M**icroProse have just announced the release of *Master Of Orion 2: Battle For Antares* (working title). The original was much loved by serious strategy gamers and the sequel is set to be even better, with new gameplay which "combines the theme of space exploration in *Master Of Orion* with the strategic gameplay of *Master Of Magic*". As was the case with the first game, your objective in *Orion 2* is to lead your race to become rulers of the galaxy. During your quest for intergalactic domination you will need to discover new technology, take on opposing races in tactical combat and most importantly, jump in a big spaceship and explore your head off as is traditional with these things.

Rather than zoom around the universe beating everybody up, budding politicians may want to take a more diplomatic approach by trading with their rivals and generally being extremely neighbourly and good-natured to everyone. This particular approach may also appeal to males of questionable sexuality. The big, big thing that *Orion 2* has over its predecessor is network capabilities for multi-player games, and modem link-up options for people who don't get particularly upset when they get a phone bill from Hell!

If intergalactic strategy-fests are your thing, you'll be wanting to check this little number out when it comes along, as MicroProse have a habit of producing very good games of this type at the drop of a hat. The game is scheduled for release at the end of this month.





**Chris Anderson**  
paid a flying visit to Dusseldorf to see how Blue Byte "were getting on with their eagerly awaited sequel to Settlers."

# Settlers 2

Bulletin special:

**B**LUE BYTE SOFTWARE ARE NOT THE biggest software house in the world, yet they have already established themselves as a force to contend with by releasing top-notch games like the *Battle Isle* series and *Settlers*. When we heard *Settlers 2* was nearing completion, we simply had to pop over and have a look at it, and very nice it looks too. The graphics are now incredibly crisp in SVGA, and the games designers have gone to great lengths to improve on what was already a class

Transport has been improved too. In the original game you could have a lot of problems if you had too many people on the road, causing congestion and thus slowing down your production line. You can now use horses and donkeys to move stuff about and they can carry several items at a time so this speeds things up considerably.

Military operations are now much easier to organise and carry out with a new feature which allows you to build huts for your armies to stay in near an area you are planning to attack. This means you no longer have to wait for your armies to go all the way from their castle to the point of conflict, a time-consuming process which can often mean your men get to the battle ages after all their mates have already popped their clogs. For light relief from all your strategic duties, you can now run around after tiny little animals (deer or sheep) and beat them up and make food out of them. Generally, *Settlers 2* looks like it will be more challenging, more interesting, and more feature-filled than its illustrious predecessor.

However, Blue Byte were anxious to prove that *Settlers 2* is not the only ace



they've got up their sleeve by unveiling *Archimedean Dynasty*, a very smart looking submarine sim with gorgeous graphics, tons of missions, and an on-going storyline which unfolds as you successfully complete each of the levels.

The gameplay is fast and furious, with arcade-style underwater shooting sequences, and judging by the demo of the game we were given, this could be a real winner for Blue Byte when it comes out later this year. We'll bring you a preview of *Archimedean Dynasty* as soon as we get a playable version of it.

Blue Byte have also been working hard on completing *Albion*, their massive RPG set on an alien world. Graphically, the game looks similar to *Ultima 7*, using the familiar top-down view, although players will also get to explore their environment from a 3D perspective.

Finally, *Chewy: Escape From F5* is Blue Byte's attempt to cash in on LucasArts adventures like *Sam & Max* and *Day of the Tentacle*. The game is complete apart from the addition of an English voice-over and should be ready for review next issue. For more info on any of these games, contact Blue Byte on 01604 232200. **Z**

product to begin with. Completing the various worlds in the game is no longer a simple matter of just capturing a percentage of the world for yourself. The levels are now mission-based, so you will have to complete various objectives before you finally finish. There are many new features in the game too: you can now place a camera on the screen which follows your little people about as they perform the tasks you have given them. This means you can keep an eye on a scout for example, while you send another one off to explore new territory, or maybe place a camera on your castle so you will be immediately alerted if the enemy come and attack you.



(Above) *Archimedean Dynasty* is shaping up to be one of the best looking games of the year.

(Right) *Settlers 2* features incredibly detailed hi-res graphics.

(Above centre) *Chewy* bears a suspicious resemblance to *Day of the Tentacle*





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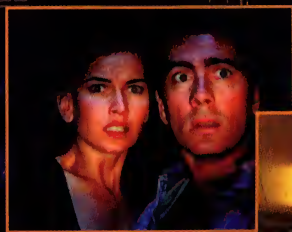
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# AT HOME WITH... ROWAN

THROUGH  
THE KEYHOLE

Rowan has a bit of a reputation for

producing rather nice flight sims. **Jeremy Wells** went up to Runcorn to see whether this was down to hard work, detailed research and imaginative programming – or just something they put in the water.

If I told you that Rod Hyde (head honcho at Rowan Software) was currently putting the finishing touches to a 14-page essay entitled 'Why did the Camel turn to the right quicker than the left?', you might just get some kind of insight as to how obsessive this man is.

As far as Rod is concerned, the best flight sim is the most accurate and realistic one. If you don't come away from a Rowan game with half an idea of what it was really like to take a heap of wood, canvas and metal into a dogfight, shoot down a few Hun and then find your way safely back home, just like Micky Mannock did some 80 odd years ago, as far as Rod is concerned, he's failed.

Hence the aforementioned essay. If the Camel actually did turn to the right quicker than the left (and, just in case you're interested, Rod thinks it's something to do with the combined effects of 'The Gyroscope', torque, 'P effect' and slipstream - but ultimately feels that "it's all down to physics"), Rod wants the Camels in his new combat sim to do the same. If you query Rod's fanaticism (for want of a better word) you'll get a considered explanation that



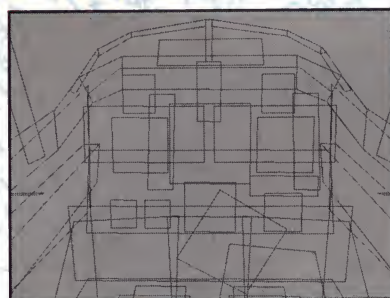
(Above) Everything's a lot more detailed than *Dawn Patrol*. Even the intro and menu screens look polished.

(Background) Rowan used original trench maps to re-create an accurate and detailed player environment.



seems just a little rehearsed. You get the feeling he's answered this one before: "Our previous flight models were quite forgiving. This was so that people could play the game without having to concentrate too much on keeping the aircraft in the air. The next step [in gaming terms] is to make the whole combat experience more of a challenge. Flying a Camel was difficult enough, let alone having to shoot down another plane. Many novice pilots lost their lives after just a couple of missions because they didn't really know how to control their aircraft. I want our next project, *Flying Corps*, to be more representative of what it was really like to be a young novice pilot back in 1917... to get some idea of just how difficult it was. As an example, the new flight model treats the two wings separately, rather than as a single unit; if you attempt to perform a particular manoeuvre in a certain plane, one of the wings might break off. The player will have to learn to fly each of

(Right & far right) *Flying Corps* will feature realistic 3D cockpits for each aircraft. They're still deliberating about whether to put a map on your knee. Wood veneer finish and air conditioning will come as standard however.



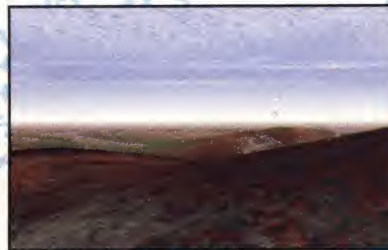
the six different planes, and get to understand their limitations and compensate accordingly. There will be an option to switch to an easier flight model, but ultimately we want to give the player the choice and at the same time give the game more scope."

## The next big thing...

Rod would be the first to admit that Rowan's recent forays into the flight sim market have placed more emphasis on shooting things than actually flying an aircraft or directing a campaign. With *Flying Corps* all this is about to change. "It's much more of a traditional flight sim," explains Rod. "There are four historically accurate campaigns (see boxout) to complete as well as various training aides to get the player used to flying a WWI aircraft. We've tried to make everything as accurate as possible and involve the player more in each campaign. They won't just be flying and notching up kills but actually directing the campaign - if they're good enough, that is. They'll start as a novice pilot and, if they do well, they'll get promoted and eventually be in charge of their own squadron. They'll then have to decide what missions they fly, who flies with them and generally manage their squadron, looking after new novice pilots and selecting targets. It will be a







lot more involved."

## Five go mad in France

It's not just the new and improved flight models, aircraft and campaigns that are true to life however - Rowan are striving to re-create an accurate player environment that is totally representative of what northern France looked like in the period between 1917-18. As a result they are using genuine trench maps and charts to re-construct the campaign area and they've even been over to France to take photos of the forests, hills and surviving buildings to make it look as accurate as possible on screen.

But inevitably problems crop up when creating such a detailed environment: over half the CD (over 300 megs) is dedicated to the landscape and then there's the weather, clouds and contouring to consider. To keep it down to a real minimum (meg-wise), the programmers decided upon three levels of detail: a 'really detailed bit' (with all the correct buildings, roads and trees etc) which is limited to specific campaign areas, or the area that the user would fly in most often; a 'not so detailed bit', which still includes all the correct contours, roads and the odd building, which might be the area the player might fly over to get to a detailed bit; and then a 'flat and not really very interesting bit' that surrounds the other two areas, and exists mainly so that players don't fly off the end of the world. Altogether, it's a lot more detailed than *Dawn Patrol*, and about as comprehensive as you're going to get.

## On a mission...

As previously stated, *Flying Corps* will be much more mission-based than its predecessors. Players will be treated to fully animated and narrated campaign briefings which will outline what the objectives, time scale and weather

(Above) Flying home after going a few rounds with the Bosch.

(Above right) *Flying Corps* will feature undulating terrain (in all the right places) as well as clouds and varying weather conditions.

(Above far right) To win promotion and secure a regular place in the squadron you'll have to pass various tests, such as playing follow-my-leader with crazy bridge storming aces.



(Above) The flight models will be a lot more realistic for the aircraft in *Flying Corps*, which means you'll have to learn how to fly before you can go into combat.

Historically interesting fact: Part One - The Camel actually killed more novice pilots than the German airforce did.

conditions are likely to be, and after assessing the situation they can select their tactics accordingly. Depending on their rank, players will also be able to select which missions they fly themselves, what formation their squadron flies in (using a unique click-and-drag utility that looks like something out of a footie game) and even paint their aircraft in their chosen colours. Each of the four campaigns are absolutely massive and made up of missions (over 120 per campaign) based on actual events. Players will be able to 'look up' how each campaign actually progressed in the on-line library while being kept up to date in-game with regular news bulletins to see how their actions compare to real events. The player will also have to contend with random attacks generated by the new 'Random Reactive Mission Developer' and complete certain training missions (such as playing follow-my-leader with a squadron leader who has a penchant for flying under bridges) in order to win promotion.

## And finally...

*Flying Corps* will also feature a 3D cockpit, complete with working instruments and full CD speech - not via a radio though (that's way too modern), but through a sort of stream of conscious thought from the pilot that warns the player to keep their eyes peeled and take a good look round if they're entering a danger area or a

known haunt of an enemy ace. This will really act as a kind of in-flight help that keeps the player informed as to what's happening, the thought behind it being that in real-life the pilot would constantly be looking around him, checking for enemies. This is impractical in-game and, as there's no radar, Rod thought it would help keep the player involved and add tension. It can, of course, always be switched off, but it's there if you want it - as is the rather rousing music that accompanies each mission as you fly into battle.

At the end of each mission, the player will get a serious de-briefing which will include a commentary on their performance and snapshots of various high-points. This can then be saved and kept for posterity (if you're the sentimental type).

Although *Flying Corps* isn't due for release until the autumn, it already looks like being one of the most accurate and detailed flight sims ever developed. But then what else would you expect from Rowan? **Z**

## Coming in '97

Rod's already thinking about a Seaplane mission disk that will involve a spot of sub hunting for *Flying Corps*, but in the meantime he's found time to direct at least some of his attention to *MIG Alley*, a campaign flight sim based on the Korean Conflict of the early 1950s due out early next year. It's a long way off, but Rod's pretty certain that it will involve the player upgrading from prop to jet and will feature (among others) the MIG 15, YAK-9, F80 Shooting Star and B45 (Tornado). It will also take advantage of the new contoured landscape generator and will feature missions in the mountains where the player will have to fly below the peaks. Smart.

## Four campaigns

*Flying Corps* features four real-life campaigns that will be accurately represented, as well as real aces and detailed scenarios. Here's a brief run down of what each campaign will entail:

### 1. The Circus

Beat Baron Richthofen's record of 21 kills in a month and take control of the infamous Jasta squadron.

### 2. The Battle of Cambrai

The first battle in which tanks were massed together to lead an attack. Make sure the British offensive fails at all costs using strategic air strikes.

### 3. The Spring Offensive

It's February 1917 and a fresh-faced recruit arrives at the front. First he must prove himself in training missions, then he must go balloon busting, engage in some close support air missions and finally fly close support missions in the first ever tank versus tank battle.

### 4. Hat in the Ring

Exceed famous American Ace Eddie Rickenbacker's number of kills in just a few short months. Get promoted to Squadron Leader and awarded the Congressional Medal of Honour.



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# AT HOME WITH... NEON

Neon are the people responsible for bringing us *Mr Nutz* in those halcyon days of the Amiga. Thankfully, that didn't stop Ocean from signing this talented young bunch of programmers to work on three exciting new PC projects. **Jeremy Wells** popped over to Frankfurt to see just what they've got lined up to come our way...





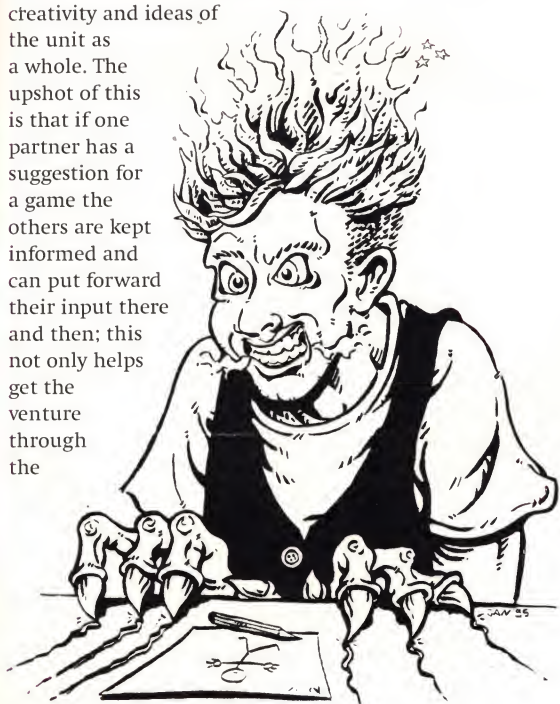
(Right) Neon are moving forwards at the speed of light, which is hardly surprising with such a talented team onboard.



**N**eon figure very prominently in Ocean's plans for the future, and when you see what they've got lined up for this year you can begin to understand why they're hotly tipped as the next big thing to come out of Germany – no mean feat for a bunch of guys who started out messing around with Commodore 64s and Atari units, doing the odd console conversion and getting ripped off by German publishers who didn't seem to like parting with their Deutschmarks once the job was done.

Although only officially formed last year in 1994, Neon have already become the largest independent developer in Germany (now that Factor 5 have legged it to the States to work with LucasArts), and with the backing of Ocean they're looking to concentrate on developing their own products for the PC, PlayStation and Saturn; no doubt they'll be happy to leave the money-grabbing German publishers to fight among themselves.

Everyone in the team has a strong programming pedigree, so they decided to set themselves up as self-managing partners in an attempt to create a working environment that encouraged the creativity and ideas of the unit as a whole. The upshot of this is that if one partner has a suggestion for a game the others are kept informed and can put forward their input there and then; this not only helps get the venture through the



(Below) A self portrait of Jan Rathje, illustrator for *Vanished Powers*. Blimey!

crucial embryonic stage, it means that the final game is a combined effort – and as the saying goes, two heads are better than one. And as far as Neon are concerned it's not a bad way of doing things – so far the process has spawned three games, which currently have the working titles of A1, B1 and B2. Two of the games in question use a powerful 3D engine which was developed

in-house by 3D programming wizard Matthias Weiderwach, the youngest of the bunch, and then adapted to suit. Both B1 and B2 are being developed for the PlayStation with the PC versions

trailing about three weeks behind. In order to get it all up to speed, Neon decided to create their own 3D libraries rather than use the ones provided by Sony – they not only do things a bit 'differently' (to put it politely), but they are also easier to convert to other platforms, such as the PC and Saturn. The good news is that as far as speed and detail are concerned, the PC formats compare favourably (though they use a more limited palette of 256 colours) and they should follow almost immediately once the PSX versions are completed.

On the downside, it means that the games being developed at the moment are very much aimed at the pick-up-and-play console market and consequently cater to the strengths of the new 3D chip sets: in other words the emphasis is very much on producing pacey 'in yer face' 3D action games that will appeal most to a generation brought up on a diet of *Mario Kart* and *Ridge Racer*. Not such a bad thing you might think, but

## **Game A1 (Vanished Powers)**

The game known as *Vanished Powers* came about after a couple of the guys from Neon were in England for the ECTS (European Computer Trade Show) back in April '94. After presenting their ideas to a number of publishers to no avail, they spent most of the next day (and night) in their hotel room coming up with new ideas and concepts for games. Once signed to Ocean, work started on the game proper in June '94 and has now really taken shape (after a bit of re-working) and is well on schedule for a Christmas release (!).

In its simplest form, it's best described as an LBA come *Ultima* come *Time Commando* type affair that has the player exploring a massive fantasy world made up of half a dozen different environments and interacting with around 100 'intelligent' motion-captured characters. Using a mix of spells, hand to hand combat and initiative (read 'puzzle solving'), the player has to jump/climb/throw/slash their way through level upon level in search of treasure, fame and a chick called Lyra who reckons you're a prince and wants you to restore her 'vanished powers'. To say that it looks gorgeous would be an incredibly wicked understatement, and let's face it – it's this kind of game that the PC does best. Get your best anorak out of the wardrobe now.







as programmer Peter Thierolf (who appears to be Neon's unofficial spokesman mainly because he speaks the best English) goes to great lengths to explain, that's not what the PC is best at: "It's cool to be 3D at the moment, and everyone's creating fast-moving, flashy 3D games. This is okay, but at Neon we've always tried our best to concentrate on producing games that people will keep on playing."

"Gameplay sells and will keep a player coming back for more once the novelty of nice texture-maps and fast moving graphics has worn thin. Everyone's got a workable 3D engine that they can bolt a game onto. We've got a fantastic engine and we want to use it to create fantastic games, for the PlayStation, Saturn and especially for the PC - it's certainly a very important market for us."

Of course, with the numerous new 3D accelerator cards coming onto the market, this style of game (in theory) shouldn't pose a problem for future PC development once the industry has some sort of standard to work to. So will everything be 3D and super fast

from now on and can the PC really compete as a gaming platform?

Peter thinks so: "If you look at what's happening in Japan at the moment, there seems to be a 2D backlash going on. People want to play games where the emphasis is on game-play and not just how many millions of polygons can be manipulated per second. This is where the PC has all its roots and that's why we will always be developing very playable games for it - and it's easy to port the code over to other platforms, of course."

And what games are they playing at Neon at the moment? "We haven't had much time to play any lately," Peter admits. "We're too busy testing what we've written the day before. We've all played *Command & Conquer* a bit though, and *Warcraft 2*. But we still play the old Commodore 64 and Amiga stuff a lot too - it makes a nice change to sit down in front of some tiny sprites and play a really good game when you've spent the last 12-hour block being mesmerised by thousands of texture-mapped polygons."

And can Peter see the Neon games of today being played in the year 2006, when people are sitting in front of their fancy Centium 540s using a PlayStation emulator? "It would be nice to think

## Product details

Developer: Neon

Publisher: Ocean

Telephone: 0161-832 6633

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: 3rd & 4th quarters of 1996

that in ten year's time people would still go back to a game like *Tunnel* and play it for an evening and then end up thinking 'Yeah, that game was cool'. Now that would be great."

Well, it looks like we'd better give Mystic Meg a ring and see what she reckons. And while you're at it... **Z**



## Game B1 (Tunnel)

B1, which is also known as *Tunnel*, is an incredibly fast action-packed subterranean 3D blaster that manages to make *Descent* look like *Pyrotechnica*.

According to the chaps at Neon the 3D engine used in *Tunnel* is "the best of its kind in existence". It's not only extremely fast and able to throw around loads of polygons in the bat of an eyelid, it also features some rather top real-time lighting effects and sound sourcing (which not only adds heaps of essential atmosphere, but means that to some extent you have to rely on flares/chaff and rockets to see where you're going).

When you first see it you immediately think 'Descent clone', but it's really more comparable to a sort of *Ridge Racer* come *WipeOut* affair (with better weapons) because your craft is more of a hover tank than a free floating space dart. In terms of gameplay it's comparable to a 3D *Alien Breed* with its tunnel scouring mission structure (go here, shoot/retrieve/rescue this and get the hell out) and pacey 'race against time' level design that requires you to master the art of power-sliding and mine dodging, while keeping half an eye cocked at your 3D scaling map.

Neon are currently tweaking the artificial intelligence of the enemy tanks and craft (they will dodge, duck, dive and weave - and then follow you), and finalising the level design to take advantage of the interactive environment, traps, jumps and various scenarios (cityscape/sewer/industrial and of course tunnels) that they've concocted. Although not quite as visually impressive as the PSX version, it already nips along at a fair rate and will look quite glorious running in SVGA once the ported code is optimised for the PC. *Tunnel* is due for release around May/June time.



## Game B2 (Viper)

First it was called *Hornet*, now it's going under the name of *Viper*. Who knows what B2 will be called by the time it's released in the Summer?

Using similar 3D technology to B1 (hence the name), B2 is being programmed to lead on the PlayStation, with PC and Saturn versions to follow. Okay, so there's no denying that it's a shoot 'em up, plain and simple, but it's also the kind of game that you'll happily sit down and watch someone else play, as well as having a go on it yourself - it looks so damn fine. Just about everything is made up of texture-mapped polygons, which means the lavishly detailed enemy craft shatter into a thousand tiny pieces when you blast 'em and disappear into an impressive translucent, light-sourced ring of smoke.

As far as gameplay goes, the way the helicopter moves around the screen is enough to keep most people hooked (it really is that smooth) and the different levels will require the player to fly to certain areas of the city, plant mines, destroy specified targets, smite various 'intelligent' end of level baddies and then escape to safety. B2 will no doubt get the console kids creaming their (baggy) pants when it's released in May/June, and it should fill a very vacant gap in the PC market too.









# VIRTUAL SNOOKER

*starring*  
**STEVE DAVIS**


and presented by **RONNIE O'SULLIVAN**




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# Battle Arena Toshinden

(Right) <Burp> S'cuse me. Onions y'see. They play havoc with me guts... Ooh, terrible wind love, terrible wind.



Going in to hospital is never a pleasant experience but **Pete Hawley** has bounced back incredibly well after the rather painful operation of having his PlayStation gamepad surgically removed. At least it makes him an ideal candidate to take a look at the latest PlayStation conversion.



**S**ony are screaming about the global success of their new 32-bit Super Console, the PlayStation. In fact a recent press release containing quotes from senior Sony executives stated that the PlayStation's success was comparable to the launch of the Walkman. Hmmm, sounds a bit like John Lennon claiming that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus.

Anyway, I digress. Even if you've been living in a cave for the last 12 months you'd have to have tried pretty damn hard to miss the hype. Well, *PC Zone* succumbed to the might and excellence of the latest in the new breed of Japanese super consoles and everyone, yes everyone, on the editorial team now owns one. The beauty of this new

## Product details

Developer: Digital Dialect

Publisher: FunSoft

Telephone: 0181-748 7565

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: TBC

machine, from a PC owner's point of view, is that most game developers working on the PC are also producing titles for the PlayStation and vice versa; this means that we all get the best of both worlds, a fact that's become even more of an issue recently with the introduction of 3D cards such as the 3D Blaster and Diamond Edge.

The first batch of titles to hit the PlayStation (and ironically the accelerator boards on the PC) were 3D beat 'em ups. Sony and Sega have had an immediate head start with pixel-perfect conversions of their arcade flagship titles – *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter* – but the PC has proved once again that it can come pretty close to matching whatever these machines can do, and in a year's time should even surpass the strongest console efforts. Especially with cards like the PowerVR on the horizon (see news item this month).

## Console hits!

*Battle Arena Toshinden* was the first title to be released in Japan, Europe and the US for the PlayStation and at all the trade shows prior to the console's official launch it was used to demonstrate the sound, power and graphical excellence of the new

(Right) The special moves are all quite ridiculous and often involve the fighter hurtling into the air first.

(Far right) Yes, I know it's a novel way of scratching my testicles but it works. Don't knock it OK?



IN PRODUCTION





machine. Everyone stood around, mouths agape, crying: "Blimey, I've never seen the likes of this before, looks kinda spunky!" Well, we were in America at the time, and those screaming yank pundits were right, it is kinda spunky; although at first the PC version doesn't appear to quite live up to the power of the PlayStation, it will be the first fully-3D beat 'em up on the PC.

### Spunky?

The game will basically follow the same structure as most fighting titles: using an array of combo and special moves plus magical weaponry you have to despatch each character in turn, all of which increase in strength as you progress. The PC conversion is very near completion but you can try it for yourself thanks to the demo on this month's cover disc. Of course the final version will have far more detail, plus a couple of new features and characters that don't appear in the PlayStation format.

Probably the most important point to make at this stage is the inclusion of code in the finished product that will support a number of 3D accelerators (which ones has yet to be confirmed), but nevertheless this means that it will look and play with much more fluidity than a standard PC 3D game. This seems to be the way forward for many developers, and under the Windows 95 desktop this 3D code will be supported

regardless of the make of the accelerator in your machine; the upshot of this is that thankfully there's unlikely to be the sort of VHS versus Betamax type of format war that the PC is desperately hoping to avoid.

### Features, anyone?

*Toshinden* will be the only tournament-style fighting game that supports full 360 degree rotation – *Virtua Fighter* on the Diamond Edge is true 3D, but it doesn't run on a standard PC and the rotation during combat falls short of a complete turn.

Obviously, comparisons will be drawn between *FX Fighter* and *Toshinden*, but again *FX Fighter*'s 3D engine is limited. During combat in the *Toshinden* arena it will be possible to alter the viewpoint from 'eye in the sky' down to a very close and in your face angle.

All the PlayStation characters are here with their special moves, but it is still unclear how the eight-button PlayStation pad control method will be

translated to the PC – it still seems to have problems with four-button pads! Needless to say, all the moves will be included and Digital Dialect have gone to great lengths to recreate the impressive lighting and magical effects in the PlayStation version. Choose from the whip-lashing Sofia, the ultra quick, sword wielding Eeji or the botty wielding, fart releasing Fo, the old man with a digestion problem.

*Toshinden* is primarily a two-player game but the single-player one will contain extra features over the original

(Above) Come down at once, you look utterly ridiculous.

## Take a look for yourself



Getting a taster for a game yourself combined with reading an extensive preview is the best way to get an idea of

what something's like, wouldn't you say? So load up the CD and check out the demo of *Toshinden* (which, incidentally, *PC Zone* went to great lengths to obtain from our friends over the pond). This version doesn't work with 3D accelerators but the 360 degree rotation and special moves are all in there. Enjoy!

And if you've survived the thrill of that you can check out the official *Toshinden* page at the address below:

<http://www.play-mates.com>

Note: Parents concerned about the content available from this address needn't worry – it contains nothing you might expect from the name, honest!

version, including an extra level and secret hidden characters. Another advantage over the PlayStation will be the ability to play via serial cable, modem and IPX network – the word Tournament will really mean something when there are eight players involved.

*Toshinden* will run on most machines, although a Pentium is recommended. Options to reduce shading effects and detail levels in the characters and impressive backdrops will be incorporated, so there's no need for 486 owners to panic at the sight of these screenshots.

Having played the incredible PlayStation version on more than a few occasions, the *PC Zone* team is probably more critical than most, but examining this early version with an open mind and without bias, it's looking absolutely incredible, especially when compared to some of the current fighting games. *Battle Arena Toshinden* looks like it should hit PC owners in all the right places – and hit them hard, like a good fighter should. **Z**

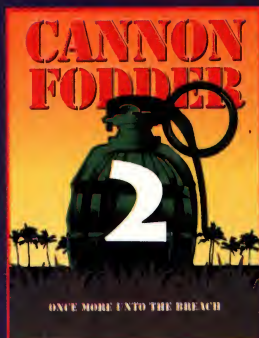
(Below) Check it out. Wonderbras, they really are excellent aren't they? I'm actually a bloke and look what it did for me!







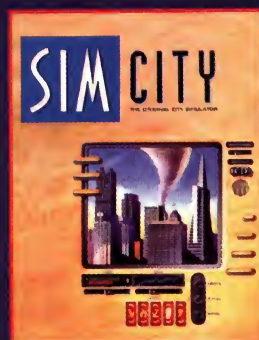
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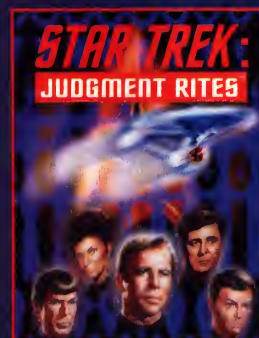


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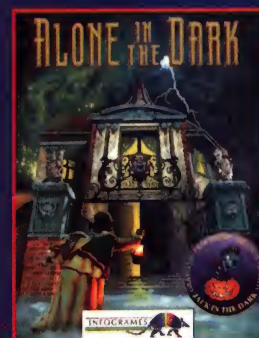
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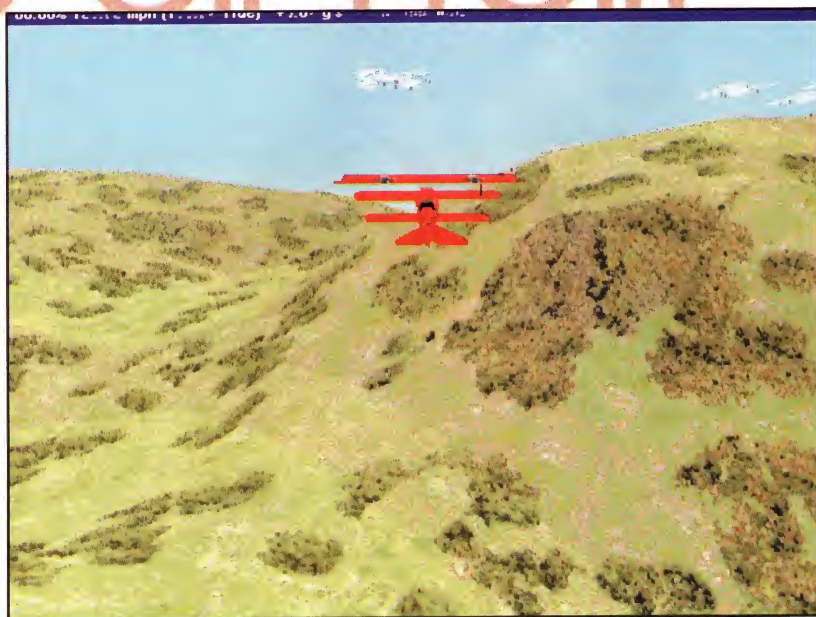
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Can you disagree with this statement: "Sierra consistently produce top notch simulations". You probably can't, so news of *Red Baron II* may interest you greatly. **Duncan MacDonald** will fill you in – once he's finished wittering on about war in general, that is...

# Red Baron II

(Right) Whaddya reckon, eh? It's a bloody hill, isn't it? It's a dirty great big plane with far too many wings and a big lump in the ground that looks like there ought to be something ominous on the other side.



**Q** KAY, NAME YOUR FAVOURITE WAR. From a spectator's point of view, as it were. Like one you'd bother to watch on telly, sprawled out on the sofa, sandwich in one hand and cup of tea in the other, as you punctuate the commentary with an occasional yelp of "Wow, look at that explosion!". Let's have a list of wars, eh?

(1) Chechen was a tiny skirmish, so that's out: not a war at all. (Those Russian helicopters never fail to impress though. The ones that look like the scary fish-submarines from *Stingray*. I saw one at an airshow once and virtually cacked my pants – and it wasn't even airborne.)

(2) Bosnia's not so hot either, when you get right down to the body-count and the lack of in-your-face visuals. They should do it properly or just stop.

(3) The Gulf war? Well, yes, it was nicely staged, I agree... but the playing area was a bit drab. Don't you think? And anyway, there wasn't a proper 'ending'.

(4) The Falklands? Forget about it. A couple of Harriers, an Exocet, some sheep, and Prince Andrew. Nice one, Thatcher.

(5) So Vietnam, then. Now that was a good one. A real epic. What a plot! And Dennis Hopper was in it! Completely out of his tree! And there was some really brilliant '60s music, too. Hendrix! Wah-wah! Drop a trip! Mental! The Stones! Excellent!

(6) The Korean War takes a back seat mainly due to the fact that the vile Elvis Presley was spawned thereabouts.

(7) World War Two. An excellent war, yes, and with plenty

of enjoyable footage. Air, land and sea! The whole route! However, it's been done to death – and the goodies and baddies are too clearly defined. John Mills was in it, by the way. So were Gordon Jackson and Dickie Attenborough.

(8) The Spanish Civil War. Hmmm. I won't say much here, actually, because I don't know anything about it – other than it involved, er, Spain.

(9) World War One! Yippee! We're finally there. (*About time – Ed.*) The main problem with World War One, though, is that although there was action by the bucketload, it was in black and white... and everyone moved in a sort of speeded up jerko-motion. Come Autumn 1996, however, we'll be able to enjoy the whole spectacle again, and this time round it'll be in colour! (What a link, huh?)

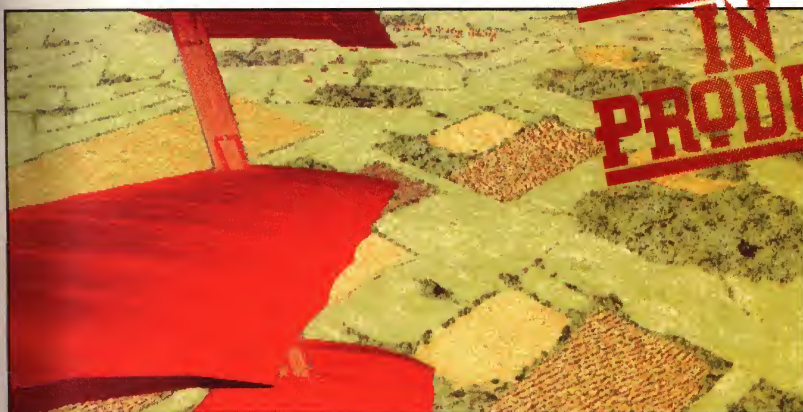
## Those magnificent men...

If you're into flight sims (and if you bothered to get beyond that link then you probably are), there's a good chance you've played the original *Red Baron*. And jolly good it was too, wasn't it? But technology marches inexorably forwards, and poor old *Red Baron* has aged badly in the process. So what exactly is the new blood, *Red Baron II*, going to be offering over and above its old man? Let's have a gander.

## In their flying machines...

This time around you won't be forced to choose between being just a Tommy or a Kraut. Why? Because you'll be allowed to be a Frog or a Yank as well, that's why. (Not that anyone in their right mind is going to want to play a





## Product details

Developer: Dynamix

Publisher: Sierra

Telephone: 01734 303322

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: May

'simulated French person'.) Having chosen your nationality, you'll encounter the 'ground bits' of the game: you know, those 'before and after mission' sections. And they're going to be along the same lines as they were in *Red Baron*... except that we're on CDs this time round, meaning there'll be loads of bad acting in the FMV officer's mess – including Origin-style 'multiple choice conversations'. ("Hey, Buzz, I hear Von Richtofen reckons you got yourself a cotton-candied butt!" someone might tell you. You'll then choose to reply either "Yeah, I guess the dude's got me pegged!" or maybe "That sonuvabitch! He ain't a-dealin' with no darned chicken farmer here... I'm a cockney!" You know the drill.) Oh, and I'm guessing at the naughtiness quotient: it's possible that the accents and acting will be superb. There'll also be daily newspapers to pore over, letters from loved ones (with the odd Dear John thrown in), grillings from the top brass, and lengthy discourses with the intelligence bods. And whatever else Sierra care to throw in: this project's got ten months to go, after all.

## They go up diddly up...

So the planes and the flight models then. Er, well, look at the screenshots. That's all I've got to go on as well. I can, however, tell you that Gary Sottlemeyer – the *Red Baron II* artistic and technical director – is an aeronautical prop-head: he worked on *Falcon 3* and *Falcon 4*. Good credentials. "What's more," added the proud Sierra spokesperson, "his father was a pilot in the US Air Force!" Not that that means anything of course... my dad was a helicopter pilot, but my sister can't even park a car! Still, expect the flight engine to be getting on for superb. The *ai*, too, if we're to believe these Sierra bods. And what about the planes themselves? Thirty-five of the buggers: each reconstructed, apparently, to the smallest detail – and all ready and waiting to be taken into the 70,000 square mile playing area.

The airbase, incidentally, is going to be a hive of activity. Planes taking off, returning damaged, crash landing, and so on. From the sound of things, it's going to be a feat in itself just taxiing to the take-off point without a collision.

## They come down tidily down...

The front-end structure of the game is going to be familiar to anyone who's played any Sierra simulation. There'll be the bevy of single historic missions (user definable, as always), instant dogfighting shenanigans (with

(Above) "Wahey! Look ma, no hands!"

enemy aces of your own choosing), and then, of course, the meat of the game – the full-blown 1914-18 campaign (containing the aforementioned FMV fests, and missions taken from a historical database).

Possibly more brilliant than all of this, though, are going to be the network and modem options. At last! *Falcon 3* head-to-head encounters may be a bit of a titter... but a tight turning dogfight? At 130 mph? In planes that stall if you so much as sneeze on them? Bliss. I here and now lay down the modem-gauntlet to all takers. You will spiral to the earth in flames! I am the king of the air! Kiss my legs! (*Steady on! – Ed.*) **Z**

(Bottom) As far as all the texture-mappy stuff goes, this is looking to be one of the most impressive flight sims ever!



## An interview with Baron Von Richtofen

(Taken from *Das Bastuud Maganziner*, Oktober 1915)

**Das Bastuud:** Killen Sie das bastuden Englanders mit guilten?

**Richtofen:** Nein! Nein! Joyen! Ich schmilser ocht burnen! Ha ha!

**Das Bastuud:** Ha ha! Zet leather panty, Sie wearen gan?

**Richtofen:** Ha ha ha! Ich dem wearen, jah! Zocht untel!!!

**Das Bastuud:** Eins? Zwei?

**Richtofen:** Funf! Mit das üben! Die kuntos acht! Jat gehrt?

**Das Bastuud:** Ha ha! Hoogenstadt!

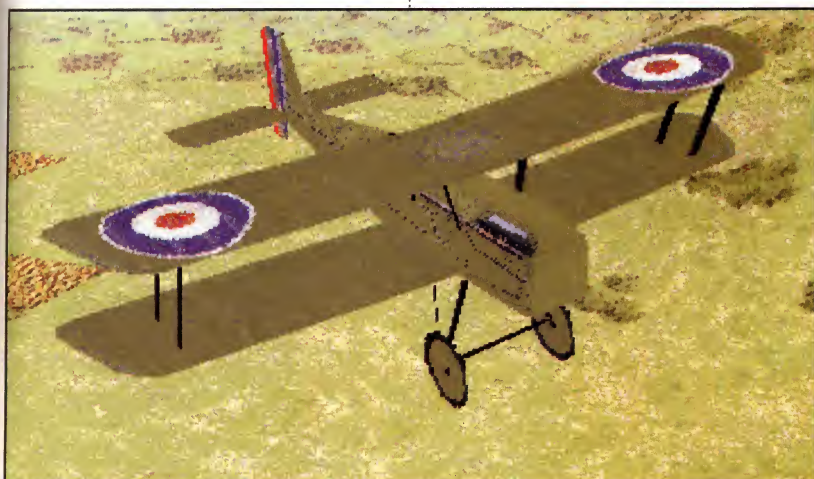
**Richtofen:** Ha ha!! Zeiner bost!! Uben, üben!!

**Das Bastuud:** Ha ha ha!

**Richtofen:** Ha ha ha!!!!

**Das Bastuud:** Ha ha ha ha!!

(Er, this doesn't work quite as well as *Franglais* – Ed.)





# Indestructibles

**Just as things are starting to get going on *Indestructibles*, our man and head honcho on the project Sean Cooper has decided to go walkabout... for a year! What's going to happen to the game then? We take one final peak into the development of a super game...**

**S**OMETIMES A MAN HAS TO DO WHAT a man has to do, and I have made the difficult decision to take a year off and travel around the world. I have been at Bullfrog since I was sixteen and in that time have been involved in some way on almost every single Bullfrog project. Now out of the blue I have the chance to do a bit of

travelling and have decided to see the world while I'm still young enough to enjoy it.

So where does this leave *Indestructibles*?

Well, our Research and

Development department

will continue to work hard to

create the most flexible and awesome 3D engine ever and they will be working as hard as possible

over the coming months. This is the team responsible for all of the Bullfrog engines so far, including *Magic Carpet* and *Dungeon Keeper*. So, as I'm sure you'll understand, I'm pretty confident that they'll do a pretty good job of coming up with the goods. Fin's fabulous graphics will remain (obviously) and I'm sure he'll continue to work on the look and the feel of the game until he's completely satisfied with the whole thing.

## I'll be back!

Despite all of this development work, my long holiday still means that the project is without a lead programmer. At the moment, all of the lead programmers at Bullfrog are involved in other projects and as a result the continuation of programming work on *Indestructibles* will have to wait until at least one of the other projects is completed. What this really means as far as all of you are concerned is that the game can't be finished until much, much later and won't be released until the Autumn of 1997 instead of Autumn 1996 as previously thought. Hopefully, I

(Below left) All of the development work and all of the graphics work will continue...

Unfortunately the project is now without a programmer so the game has been put back an entire year!

should be back by then and there's a pretty good chance that I could pick up the lead programmer role at that point.

*Indestructibles* is my baby and it has been a really hard decision to leave it in someone else's hands. Fortunately, I know the way that Bullfrog works and I'm sure that they are more than capable of doing justice to the concept without me.

Working on games at Bullfrog has been my life for a very long time now. To be honest, I would be extremely surprised if I came back and then couldn't pick up where I've left off. I'm looking forward to visiting strange places and meeting new people and who knows what inspiration I will find for new games designs while I'm on my travels.

I will be back, *Indestructibles* is going to happen. I've enjoyed writing these diaries for PC Zone. I will return to Bullfrog next year so I suppose it's "see you later" and not "goodbye".

## Product details

**Developer:** Bullfrog

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts

**Telephone:** 01483 579399

**Format:** CD-ROM

**Release date:** Autumn 1997 (!!!)



IN PRODUCTION



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What an opportunity! Dress up in fab *Wing Commander* clobber and then bugger off to make your own dodgy videos – if you win our amazing compo, that is.

**W**ING COMMANDER IV IS FINALLY ready and should be in the shops by the time you read this (about bloody time, eh?). To celebrate the fact that this the game has finally been released, EA and Origin are giving away some rather cool prizes – and here they are (tah dah)...

#### FIRST PRIZE

- A totally cool Camcorder ('coz *WCIV* is a movie, innit?)
- A limited edition jacket
- A *WCIV* T-shirt

#### TWO RUNNERS-UP

- A limited edition jacket
- A *WCIV* T-shirt

And now... the question which has kindly been supplied by the chaps at EA so it should be extra-specially difficult. Wait for it...

**What is the name of the character played by Mark Hamill in *Wing Commander IV*?**

Très tough, non?

Send your entries to:

*Wing Commander Compo*

PC Zone

Dennis Publishing

18 Bolsover Street

London

W1P 7HJ

Rules: all entries must be with us by 31 March 1996. No correspondence will be entered into, so for god's sake, don't you dare call in. The editor's decision is final – failing that we'll empty all of the entries on the floor and then pick one totally at random.

#### WING COMMANDER IV COMPETITION

##### Question

What is the name of the character played by Mark Hamill in *Wing Commander IV*?

.....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Postcode: .....







(Above) "Did you hear something back there, Chuck?" "Nah! It's probably just the wind."

(Above right) "Gotcha! And don't you bloody dare take the piss out of *Phantasmagoria* ever, ever again!"

**I**N A WAY, THE INTRO 'FART GAG' IS quite an apt in-road to this preview, and here's why. You know the oft-repeated shots from telly's Bosnia show, where the camera zoomed into a puff of smoke on a hillside, and then zoomed out and panned up to show the plane that actually dropped the bomb? Well, that was an A-10, that was. It had just blown up a tree. Guff-tastic. But as that's got absolutely nothing to do with this game, I'll change tack.

Okay then. *Silent Thunder* is tagged as the sequel to *A-10 Tank Killer*. Now there is a blast from the past for you... but not a particularly brilliant one, if you want to be honest about it. It was quite good in its day, yes, but I certainly wouldn't have regarded it as a classic. Unlike *Red Baron* (whose sequel is also previewed this month), it somehow lacked scope. You know what I mean? Like *Red Baron* was a simulation of the First World War while *A-10 Tank Killer*, on the other hand, was a simulation of... well, an *A-10 Tank*

Killer. And the A-10's not the most exciting

aircraft known to humankind, is it? In fact I phoned a Statto lookalike mate of mine, who happens to be a walking aircraft encyclopedia...

**Me:** Barry, enthuse to me about the A-10.

**Barry:** Enthuse?

**Me:** Yes, enthuse. Imagine you're trying to sell me one.

**Barry:** Oh. Er, they're quite robust.

## Brick shithouse

So there's the A-10 for you... the Jonah Lomu of the aviation world, as Sierra's press information is keen to point out: "Also known as the Warthog, the A-10 is said to be indestructible. Even with the engines in flames, half the rudder blown off, and a section of the wing seriously damaged, it gets you back to base safe and sound."

Barry was right then. But what's it like to fly? And here's where *PC Zone* honesty comes to the fore, because I have to admit that we did receive a sort of interactive demo type affair, which if I was being polite, I wouldn't



mention. But I will. Yes, the scenery was nice, but it appears that the *A-10 Tank Killer* (AKA the Indestructible Warthog) flies at five frames per second. Mind you, this demo thing must have been incredibly pre-release - I can only assume that the finished product will run five times faster. If it doesn't, Sierra will have major, major problems. (Wait for the review regarding that, though.)

But what of the 'scenario'? You know, the plot and what-have-you? If you will all bear with me, let me just quote something from the press release...

"You are Jack Haggart and your mission is to eliminate three dangerous men who are threatening to destroy the fragile peace which exists between the world's nations."

It elaborates slightly...

"Track down Señor Macias in the Columbian jungle."

Fair enough, déjà vu not withstanding.

"Fearlessly infiltrate North Korean airspace where Kim Chee Lee, in a

fit of madness, is threatening his peaceful neighbours by kidnapping a movie star."

Aha... could this be, like, an attempt at 'humour'? Let's read on just a bit further, shall we?

# Silent Thunder

Duncan MacDonald was once invited to a very posh dinner party where he recognised another guest as the Saab driver who had carved him up pretty nastily earlier on the A10. Halfway through the meal, Dunc chuffed, quietly. It was the Saab driver, however, who remained the chief suspect for the rest of the evening. This makes Duncan the ideal person to preview *Silent Thunder: A-10 Revenge*.





"Put your wife on the line fighting the forces of Ali Goni Groceri, the ruthless leader of Farwei, who is preparing to launch an unprecedented wave of terrorism on the Western world."

It's telling you to put your wife on the line? This must be ironic, surely? In disbelief I re-read it, and discover it says 'life', not 'wife'. Bah.

So who can tell what's going on with *Silent Thunder*? This jury is still out, even on a mere preview level: the signs are bad, but it's not over until the fat lady sings (or something like that). I'll leave you with a final paragraph anyway, in the hope that you'll then be as utterly fascinated with the state of the final release as I now am: and so it's back to the press leaflet...

### Hollywood connection

*Silent Thunder* has a credit which reads thus: "Producer and Director, Franck Evers". You can also find out more about our Franck as a brief biography has been thoughtfully included - I've picked out some 'highlights', with the suspicious-looking bits underlined...

"Franck Evers, a Harvard graduate, came to Sierra via Hollywood, where he was a partner in an independent film house which produced a series of award-winning films such as *Gas Food Lodging*, *Mi Vida Loca* and *Swimming With Sharks*. During his Hollywood days, Franck also produced *The Mask* CD-ROM. The storyline, characters, and unique design approach to *Silent Thunder* were created by Franck in an effort to enhance the traditional flight combat experience."

So *Silent Thunder* is going to be either laughably shit, or extremely brilliant. If it turns out to be simply average, I apologise in advance for making a big deal of the whole thing. But whatever happens, I wish Franck would learn to spell his name correctly. Z

### Product details

**Developer:** Dynamix

**Publisher:** Sierra On-Line

**Telephone:** 01734 303322

**Format:** CD-ROM

**Release date:** May/June

(Above) Well, it looks a lot better than *A-10 Tank Killer*, let's just hope it plays better.

# Work at Mission Studios long enough and you'll get REALLY good at geography.

Matthew Harmon  
Vice-President of  
Development/Jetfighter III Lead  
Programmer.  
Mission Studios Corporation.

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**U.S. GOLD**

**MISSION STUDIOS**

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**JETFIGHTER III**





# Space Hulk: Vengeance of the Blood Angels

**Chris Anderson takes an early look at a Windows 95 version of EA's highly acclaimed strategy game.**

**S**PACE HULK FOR WINDOWS 95? BIG deal, you might be thinking. Well it is a big deal. What we're looking at here is not a souped-up version of the original *Space Hulk* PC game, but a rather spiffing conversion of *Space Hulk* on 3DO, which is justifiably regarded as being the best version to date. For those of you unfamiliar with this little gem of a strategy game, here's a brief recap on what it's all about...

## Incredible Hulk

An enormous hulk made up of several derelict space craft is hurtling towards the Imperial Planet Delvar III. You, as leader of the Blood Angel Terminators (well 'ard space marines), are tasked

with stopping the thing before it gets to the planet and destroys it. Several torpedoes are launched at the hulk, enabling you and your team to climb on board. Once inside, you're faced with hordes of Genestealers (horrid nasty alien thingies) all of whom are intent on wasting you and your army of do-gooders. Your objective is to wade through the aliens and get to the hulk's engines so you can shut them down. But this is easier said than done, with Genestealers lunging at you from every direction. In fact, if you thought the first game was difficult, you're in for a bit of a shock when you see this one. The artificial intelligence for the Genestealers has been significantly tweaked, making *Vengeance of the Blood Angels* an even greater challenge than its predecessor.

Thankfully, there are training missions to help you get used to the interface before wading into a full campaign. You would be well advised to take advantage of these, as the campaign missions get very tough very quickly. Apart from making the game a lot more difficult, EA have also made major improvements in the graphics department...

## Product details

**Developer:** Electronic Arts

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts

**Telephone:** 01753 549442

**Format:** CD-ROM

**Release date:** March

## Pretty aliens

All the sprites and backgrounds in the game are in SVGA. Obviously this makes the whole game look more detailed, but you'll really notice the difference when you come face to face with a roaming Genestealer (this is what made the 3DO version so good – the close-up graphics were quite amazing). The missions have been "improved" according to the press info we were sent, though exactly what the improvements are was not made clear. Probably the most exciting thing



## The story so far

### Space Hulk PC

*Space Hulk* was originally a board game from Games Workshop. The first computer version was released on PC and to a large extent was faithful to the original board game. The VGA graphics were pretty cool at the time and the gameplay was very moody and atmospheric. The CD version had speech for all the characters in the game but this ruined the atmosphere somewhat.

### Space Hulk 3DO

The 3DO version of the game had all-new missions, glorious graphics and a superb soundtrack. It beat the PC version in every department and was immediately hailed as the saviour for the 3DO (er, the 3DO had a slight problem in as much as most of the games for it have been a bit crap). In truth, the 3DO version was what the PC version should have been in the first place.

### Space Hulk for Windows 95

EA put many wrongs to right with this new version of the game, which basically takes the guts of the 3DO version and makes the whole thing even better still. SVGA graphics and a multi-player option add a new dimension to the *Space Hulk* experience. At last PC owners can claim to have the definitive version of one of the best strategy games ever to grace a PC.

(Right) The dreaded Genestealers. Come and get it sucker.







about this PC version is the inclusion of network play – up to ten people can battle to the death with each other over a network. Of course this is where PC gaming really comes into its own, so the addition of a multi-player option can only serve to enhance what was already a well smart game in the first place.

We haven't actually seen a working version of *Space Hulk* yet, but you can be sure that when it arrives at *PC Zone* we'll all be fighting over who gets to have the first look at it. As always, we will bring you a full review of the game as soon as we get our hands on it. **Z**

(Bottom) This is one of your charming terminator buddies.



I am thankful for and love living in the age of technology. Still, it's too bad more fantasy and heroic elements from the ancient past haven't survived the progression of time. At least there's still myth in science.

Dan Kaufman  
Programmer/Artist.  
Mission Studios Corporation.

## Featuring:

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**JETFIGHTER III**



Roger Zelazny

# CHRONO

*"It's a highly polished game that offers endless hours of brain teasing play. I loved it".*

PC Review.

*"Awesome graphics and sound effects create an atmospheric setting for a very unusual storyline"*

Computer Life.

*"Slick, smooth and engrossing. Adventure with attitude... how refreshing".*

PC Review.

*"Superb 3D rendered graphics create an atmospheric setting for this twisted tale of deceit and intrigue".*

PC Review.

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# MASTER

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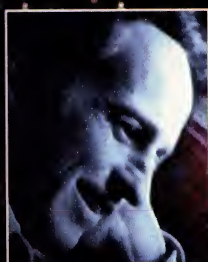
On a futuristic suburban street the night sky is backlit with explosions, the rumble of munitions is audible at a distance.

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### Roger Zelazny

Is one of the premier science fiction writers of his generation. During his career he has won six Hugos and three Nebulas as well as an array of other major awards in the field. His Novella "The Last Defender of

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Featuring the voices of:



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("Beauty & The Beast")  
as "KORDA, the  
CHRONOMASTER"



Brent Spiner  
("Star Trek: The  
Next Generation")  
as "MILO"



Lolita Davidovich  
("Intersection")  
as "JESTER"

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Chris Anderson takes a trip to a place where wanton destruction and mindless violence are positively encouraged – and we're not talking about the *PC Zone* office!

# Total Mayhem

(Right) Unit 1 gets what for after daring the big angry robot to jump through the hoops.

(Far right) Er, perhaps we shouldn't have come this way after all.



**T**AKE A LOOK AT THE SCREENSHOTS and tell me if this game isn't a dead ringer for Electronic Art's *Crusader*. This could be good news if all you want to do is spend hours on end shooting things and solving kiddie-type puzzles, or bad news if the idea of this sort of stuff bores you stupid.

However, the screenshots are pretty deceptive – *Total Mayhem* has elements that are similar to the likes of *Crusader* and *Syndicate*, but it also has a lot more besides. For example, you can control up to six 'Mayhem Soldiers' at once, giving each one individual instructions to attack, patrol, guard and so on, which brings a strong strategic element into the proceedings. There is also a greater variety of environments, both indoors and outdoors, which you can completely deface by using any of the five different weapons available, including laser rifles and grenade launchers.

## Take aim... fire... annihilate!

Of course with all this frantic pointing and clicking going on as you inform all your different units to perform various actions in the heat of battle, you will obviously need an intuitive interface that allows you to get straight to all the game's icons with ease. Domark seem to have all this well under control, judging by the demo we were shown here in the *PC Zone* office: killing enemies is simply a matter of placing a crosshair on the offending party and then clicking to fire your weapon. A press of the right mouse button brings up a row of icons which allow you to order your Mayhem bods about as you see fit.

A very neat touch indeed is the way your units gain experience with every battle they get involved in. This is the sort of thing you would normally see in those hexy-type strategy games and it's nice to see it being used in an all-action

real-time blaster like this one. Of course this makes the strategic aspect all the more important, as it's then imperative that you protect your best units during the battles (let's face it, they won't be much use to you if they're dead!).

Anyway, going back to the screenshots, I'm sure you'll agree that the graphics look very impressive indeed. And with 20 missions, each of which have various sub-missions, it could take you bloody ages to play *Total Mayhem* through to the end – and even if you manage that you can still play with your friends over a network or by modem link.

If this game lives up to our initial expectations Domark could have a real winner on their hands – however, you'll have to put any desires for carnage and destruction you may have on hold until our next issue, when we'll be reviewing the game in all its glory. **Z**

**It has a plot, well sort of**

According to the press release *Total Mayhem* is set in the future and man is a slave race on a planet run by machines. It's up to you to take control of some freedom fighters and blow all the machines up. Er, that's about it really.

**IN PRODUCTION**

## Product details

Developer: Cinematix

Publisher: Domark

Telephone: 0181-780 2222

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: March



# RIPPER

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# Conquest Of The



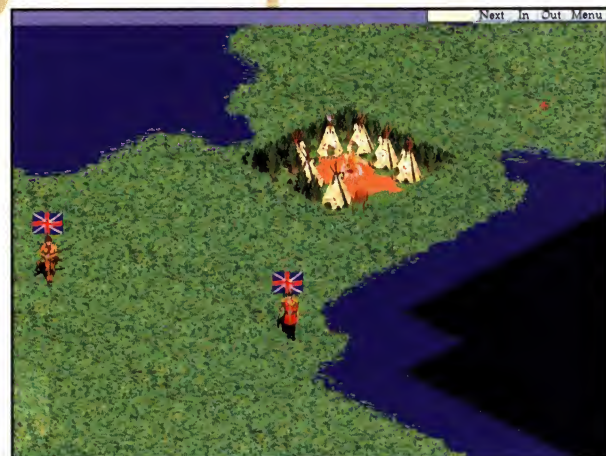
**A title based on pillaging the New World and bullying the natives? Such games can always find a place in Brian Walker's imperialist heart.**

**P**oor old Columbus, eh? For centuries he was revered as a hero; the discoverer of the New World. And then suddenly, as the age of political correctness dawned, he became something of an outcast, a leper. This discovery thing had all been a bit of a hoax. I mean, how can you 'discover' a continent when it is already awash with pesky natives? In Interplay's forthcoming *Conquest Of The New World*, con-man Chris makes an appearance as a Portuguese explorer. Who knows, maybe he can redeem himself by wiping out the natives and claiming the discovery as his own once more.

Pitted against him are fellow explorers from Britain, France, Holland and Spain,

for this is a multi-player game with network and modem options. Politically correct types can even take the role of the natives and fight back against the imperialist dogs.

Network games are all the rage since *Doom* and *Command & Conquer*. Most of these games are real-time, but *Conquest Of The New World* goes against the trend by using a turn-based system. Normally this would mean three comatose players slumped over the keyboard waiting for the fourth to complete his turn, but Interplay have got round this by introducing time penalties for procrastinators (although whacking the buggers with a big stick can actually be quite good fun). In any event, turns pass by quickly thanks to a number of automated actions. If you're into micro-management however, I wouldn't advise trying this in network mode, unless you're keen to receive a lot of rude messages.



(Left) The 3D viewpoint is on a par with that found in *Civ 2*.

(Above) The SVGA graphics are certainly some of the most attractive that we've seen in a strategy game.

## Civilization?

The object of the game is to discover key features such as lakes and rivers, and to found colonies. All of these can be named and whatever you decide to call them actually appears on the map, making you feel protective about your new kingdom. Points are awarded when each goal is achieved (a running total of the scores can easily be accessed). This is quite important as diplomacy and trade are an important feature of the game, so if there is a clear leader he'd better watch out for fellow colonialists gang-ing up. Victory can occur in various forms: trade, exploration or combat. But for those players who prefer their games a bit simpler, different levels of management are provided.

The map graphics look absolutely terrific in SVGA, as do the little figures running around exploring the territory and, it must be said, indulging in a spot of raping and pillaging. There are also some pop-up 3D animations to add to the fun. The settlements are especially attractive, making the game look like a





# New World

sort of *Sim Colony*. The game's sound has also been very well executed, from the tweeting of the little birdies to the more macho roar of cannon fire. Needless to say, the game will be on CD-ROM only.

A great deal of thought has gone into the interface, with the welcome result that movement and the issuing of any orders is simplicity itself. The Explorers, as opposed to settlers and Leaders, can be set to Auto Mode, whereby they will explore to their heart's content unless instructed otherwise, or they meet an immovable object such as an ocean.

Whether or not you get on with the combat system, however, will be a matter of taste. When a rumble occurs, the screen switches to a grid with the rival factions at each end. You can click on a unit to move and fire but there is little scope for tactical manoeuvre. Last man alive wins, though there are retreat and surrender options. It appears that the person with the biggest force will win, making everything a tad predictable.

## Golden nuggets

The other problem is that the action bears little relation to what's happening on the main map. It's all a bit rigid and abstract; I would have thought it would be better to have combat on the main map, if only in the interest of continuity. Other than that, the game looks sound in all departments, and the diplomacy facility should really come into its own when the game is networked.

*Conquest Of The New World's* antecedents include Electronic Art's *Electronic Seven Cities Of Gold*, and to a lesser degree *New World*, the board game from Avalon Hill. Of course the presentation of *Conquest* is far superior to the EA title, but it will be fairly interesting to see if the game-play matches that of what was hailed a classic in its day. Mind you, Interplay's games, from *Necromancer* onwards, have always had the emphasis firmly placed on depth of play, and I wouldn't advise betting against *Conquest Of The New World* maintaining that reputation. **Z**

## Product details

**Developer:** Quicksilver

**Publisher:** Interplay

**Telephone:** 01628 423666

**Format:** CD-ROM

**Release date:** April

(Below) The Brits attack a helpless village that appears to be stuck in the bottom of a very big hole.





# Megarace 2

(Right) The tracks now have lots of interesting twisty turny bits.



## Product details

**Developer:** Cryo

**Publisher:** Mindscape

**Telephone:** 01444 246333

**Format:** CD-ROM

**Release date:** June



(allegedly) the most entertaining driving game in the history of pc-dom? Well, er, it looks nicer for a start...

(Below) I've got a Silicon Graphics workstation and I'm not afraid to use it.

**Chris "games with '2' in them expert" Anderson brings us the low-down on Mindscape's new renderama driving game.**

**A**NYONE REMEMBER MEGARACE? Well, I expect half of you are muttering "actually I've been trying my best to forget it" while the other half are probably saying "yeah, it was great, the graphics were nice and you didn't have to do anything in it". This is mainly down to the fact that the first game looked good but unfortunately all the cars drove themselves around the various tracks, while you simply sat there and nudged the things left or right occasionally, and fired big guns at everyone.

Anyway, whatever your opinion of the original, it's now time to let bygones be bygones, forgive and forget (as Dep Ed Jeremy is fond of saying to German people) and look to the sequel with an open mind, because Mindscape have reliably informed us that the sequel has been greatly "improved", enormously "enhanced" and even "changed" beyond all recognition - this is one game that genuinely deserves to have a '2' stuck on the end of it.

So what exactly have the Mindscape bods done to completely transform an average racing game into

## They came, they saw, they rendered

James Morris, our man at Mindscape, came into our office and gave us our very own personal demo of *Megarace 2*. Suffice to say, the scenery graphics look absolutely gorgeous due to much rendering and messing about with pretty colours by the developers. The vehicles don't really look like cars anymore either; instead they look more like futuristic buggy things, and they zoom around the tracks at a lightning pace.

The big difference we noticed between *Megarace 2* and its predecessor was the ability to actually drive the cars yourself, which is of course much more fun than watching the little buggers whizz around the place without you. Generally speaking, *Megarace 2* shows improvements in every department: the tracks are more complex, giving players the opportunity to take alternate routes to get to the finish line quicker; all the vehicles have been rendered for extra realism; and the weapons are better (rather than just blasting away at everything, players will now need to strategically



(Right) Come on then, last into the Dartford Tunnel is a wuss.



place mines and oil slicks to foil opponents, and use missiles at key points to gain advantage).

## Boyle my arse

Fans of the original will be pleased to know that Lance Boyle, the presenter of the futuristic game show which *Megarace* is based around, is back for the sequel – and this time he's cornier and cheesier than ever. Lance will not only set the scene before each race, he will guide you through interactive prize sequences and – get this – he even pops up during installation to help you through the set-up. If the demo we played is anything to go by, *Megarace* is going to be an absolute blast when it hits the shops in June. We'll bring you a full review as soon as we can. **Z**

## Sur-render yourself

Almost every game we see now has either rendered sprites, rendered backgrounds, an enormously long rendered intro or, if we're really lucky, the whole bloody lot. *Megarace 2* is a pretty good example of what's coming into the office every month. No one can argue that all this rendered stuff looks pretty damned amazing, but there's one slight problem: who the hell has the kit to get these games running smoothly? I put most of the titles I get for review on a P75 with 8 megs of ram (this is what I previously thought to be an entry-level games machine), and most of the damn things run so slowly they are almost unplayable – even a P90 has problems with some of them. What I'm trying to get across here is the sad fact that you're going to need at least a P100 (and preferably a P120) if you want to play the best the industry has to offer in SVGA with all the detail switched on. If this sounds like a bit of a swizz, it's probably because it *is*. Read the text in our reviews as well as the score and captions and you won't get caught out!!!



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# Looking Back

Some games are fab for a month or so, but after a while the novelty tends to wear off. Once again we take a second look at things a while after the initial review.

## Grand Prix Manager

### MicroProse

Great game, great idea, it's just a shame that it's absolutely riddled with bugs. Unfortunately this isn't something that we are alone in finding... we have now had numerous calls from readers letting us know about the bizarre things that this game actually does.

How about these for a few weird ones then... for a start, one of the most unusual bugs reveals itself from time to time when the races are actually in progress and has a strange habit of removing certain drivers and cars from the race. Sometimes they just aren't there period, while at others they are there... but they're invisible. Cool, huh? Invisible cars. Nice one.

The other major bug that we've encountered involves the research and development aspect of the game. This one was pointed out by a reader that called in, and after we investigated we found that it only occurs from time to time. The way it reveals itself is by limiting the speed at which the R&D facility actually works. You can have a hundred blokes beavering away on some fantastic new idea and they'll still only work at the same speed as ten chaps doing the same thing, thus rendering the R&D department a complete waste of money beyond a certain point.

There are other bugs that we could go on about, but I think you probably get the point. Sadly MicroProse do not have a patch as yet, but they assure us that as soon as they do they'll give it to us to feature on our cover disk.

## The Beast Within: Gabriel Knight 2

### Sierra

Poor ol' Chris was in a right tizzy when he reviewed this last month. Although he'd been playing it for an absolute age he still hadn't got to some of the very far levels of the game (it's a bloody big one, this). Now that he's played it some more (and played it and played it and played it) he tells us that it actually improves quite significantly as time goes on.

The game originally got quite a whopping score of 88% when reviewed, making it more than worthy of a PC Zone recommended award, but the thinking now is that it could well deserve more. Jeesh... this is a rare one. It's not often that we look back and say that something deserves a higher score.

The game has been out for about a month now, so if you've been after a new adventure and have seen this in the shops and have thought twice about it... well, er... don't. It's bloody good, and by far the best Sierra adventure game in a long time. After the travesty that was *Phantasmaboriasnorica*, it seems that they've bounced back and gone and produced another classic.

## Apache Longbow

### Digital Integration

After the glowing report for *The Beast Within*, it's a shame that the next game that we look back on is because of all kinds of complaints that we've had about the thing. Yet again it's the old bug problem that has been getting people down, and *Apache* is an especially sensitive product.

So what does it do then? Well, for a start it very often does the unforgivable and crashes completely. Now, the version we had for review did this, but we were assured that this was a pre-release game only and that the final version would be perfect. This, it seems, was not to be the case. *Apache* regularly goes down for no apparent reason and frequently hangs for minutes at a time (Windows 95-style) before resuming whatever it was doing before.

It also suffers quite dramatically if you only have a machine with limited memory. By "limited" of course, we mean "less than 16Mb"... silly us. If you try and play the thing on pretty much any spec machine with only 8Mb it manages to crawl along at a painfully slow rate. Let's hope it all gets sorted out with a patch, eh? (Ooh... bit of a joke there - and an unintentional one at that).



## Cool games

We see hundreds of games over the months but there are a few that we hang on to and continue to play at lunchtime/when we're supposed to be doing more important stuff...

**Descent 2**

**Top Gun**

**Formula 1 Grand Prix 2**

**The Beast Within: Gabriel Knight 2**

**Beavis and Butt-head**

## Crap games

There are some games that you can leave in the middle of the room with a big sign next to them saying 'please steal me' and you still can't get rid of the bloody things...

**Pinball 95**

**Shivers**

**Endorfun**

**Expect No Mercy**

**Cyberbykes (as always!)**





# Reviews Section

## THE ZONE SCORING SYSTEM

### 90+ CLASSIC

Drop-dead brilliant, fab, skill, top, cool, excellent, almost as good as sex... etc, etc. Virtually flawless in all departments and oozing, yes oozing playability.

### 80-89 RECOMMENDED

Rather jolly super, but just not quite up to it in the sexual conquest stakes. More like a good snog really. One of those experiences that's more than adequate all round.

### 70-79

A good idea that's been reasonably well-implemented, but not awfully original. A bit like someone coming up to you and saying, "Do you come here often?" The sort of game you'd go for if you were pissed... or a bit desperate.

### 60-69

Just above average, but absolutely nothing to write home and tell mum about. Adequate presentation,

mediocre gameplay and failing to make the grade in the originality stakes.

### 50-59

Averagely average, Mr McAverage. Any game getting a score around this mark has absolutely nothing special about it whatsoever and will probably be forgotten almost immediately.

### 40-49

A just about bearable game which notches up a number of crippling flaws. The presentation ain't hot and the gameplay's worse.

### 20-39

Naff, and definitely worth avoiding at all costs.

### 20 and below PANTS

Absolute, complete and utter crap. It doesn't get much worse than this and therefore deserves the ultimate accolade... the PC Zone big, blue pants award for extreme naffness.

#### Thanks to

- Allison Grant at Interplay
- Nick Bog at EA
- Glen at Psygnosis
- The person at Sierra who keeps sending us this great stuff without putting a note in with it to say who they are
- Jason Dutton at MicroProse
- Mr Brennan and Mr Byron

Jason says goodbye everybody

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A round-up of the month's other releases, both full-price and budget including *Earthworm Jim*, *Pinball 95*, *NBA Jam Tournament Edition* and the budget releases of some LucasArts classics.



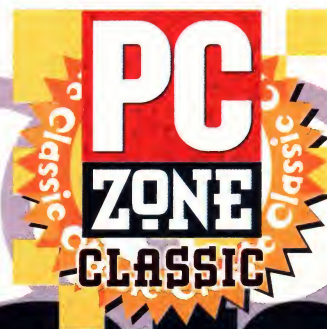
PC Zone use Gateway 2000 PCs exclusively 'cause they're absolutely fab. If you want any more information about Gateway 2000 machines, you can call them on this number:

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Interplay's 'zero gravity *Doom*' game *Descent* grabbed attention and splintered marriages when it popped up last year. David McCandless asks if the sequel will cut the mustard, do the do, get it on, and more or less kick arse... etc., etc.



# Descent

**T**HERE ARE, THEY SAY, FIFTEEN requirements for a sequel. A sequel must be many things, but primarily it must be noticeably different from the original, and, furthermore, it must enhance and draw out the qualities of the first game whilst improving and correcting the shortfalls, mistakes, and pain-in-the-arse featurettes of its predecessor. In a computer game, this is doubly true. Some games have trod the fine dividing line between 'sequel' and 'mission disk', between 'well thought out successor' and 'quite obvious cash-raking, the-public-are-clueless exercise'.

And so, with this in mind, we turn to *Descent 2*, quite blatantly the sequel to *Descent*, Doom's main rival of 1994. It was met with scattered applause over here, and tumultuous multiple orgasms over there (in the States). A great game with great graphics with some great features and great weapons, and a great engine so 3D and so swirly-rotatey that it caused one to blow one's doughnuts at regular intervals. It also had a ground-breaking eight-player network game mode with players leaving and entering at their own will.

So while the murderous robots are breaking rule number one of Asimov's Laws, let's see if *Descent 2* fulfils all the requirements of a true sequel.

## 1) It must look better.

Well, the jury's still out on this one. As you can see from the screenshots,



(Right) There are loads of missiles lying around for you to pick up and fire at monsties with.

(Below Left) Many of the levels retain the style of *Descent* with some gorgeous lighting effects popping up from time to time.

*Descent 2* bears an uncanny resemblance to... *Descent*. The same grotesquely swirling texture-maps fight for competition with garishly-coloured robots and over-bright 'scenic details' such as lava, water, and force fields. The graphics are a mixture of polygons (monsters, missiles, lasers, walls) and bitmaps (explosions, objects, power-ups). There are a bunch of new emetic wall-textures and a lot of the 'techy-industrial' look of the first game has

away from, screaming bloody murder.

The CD is, of course, packed with spoooge-worthy rendered cut scenes and movies, but since they don't add anything to the game, we're not going to mention them.

## 2) The engine must be enhanced.

It doesn't seem that much faster, but Parallax's engine is still a great one. You have full 3D movement - pitch, yaw, and

***"Descent 2 offers adequate new perils to test the Don Juan Descent player, and is easy and well-paced enough not to scare off the nervy virgin."***

been replaced by a weird kind of amorphous organic rock look (*Very descriptive - Ed*). The hi-res mode - 640x480 or 800x600 - adds a love-it-or-hate-it crispness to the visuals and clears up far away clumps of robots into clearly distinguishable things to run

roll, height, depth, and breadth, X, Y, and Z axis. With a good joystick (or even a clever mouse/keyboard setup), you can pinwheel freely around the levels, barrel-rolling, looping the loop, sliding, cruising, and banging fruitlessly into walls.





## 2

Also, the scenery has new interactive stuff which was lacking in the first game. You now have switches.

Well, they're called 'control points' and you blow them up, but basically they unlock or open doors or force fields. These pave the way for some interesting 'puzzle-solving' conundrums. Often, in fenced-off areas for example, you have to try and locate and shoot panels through the gaps to gain access. *Descent 2* also boasts 'interactive lighting' (ie you can shoot the lights Duke Nukem 3D style). This isn't always a good idea - plunging arenas into darkness can make enemies rather hard to carbonise.

### 3) It must be more challenging.

*Descent* was a good excuse to invest in one of those posh phallic joysticks - ThrustMaster, Gravis Phoenix, CH Flightstick *et al.* Many people, in these post *Descent* months, have learnt to use their multi-buttoned pitch-and-yaw joysticks as dextrously - quite frankly - as they use their own penises (ie in a blundering, hamfisted, panic-stricken, cockeyed fashion). *Descent 2* offers adequate new perils to test the Don Juan *Descent* player, and is easy and well-

paced enough not to scare off the nervy virgin.

The thoughtful programmers have countered the sheer

disorientation their panoramic 3D engine causes by introducing a 'Guidebot'. It can be found at the start of each level, trapped inside a cage. Seasoned *Descent* lovers can opt to leave it there, while Virgo's, badminton players, and people who think Marmite is better than peanut butter (and other such dregs of humanity) can blast it free and follow its cute little trail around the level. It automatically seeks out keys for you, but can be assigned other tasks with the 10 in-built commands (activated by SHIFT and a number key). They run along the lines of "Find some energy", "Locate the exit" and the highly useful "Stay Away!" command. A few other orders might have been appreciated though. Stuff like "Find me a girlfriend - it's Friday night and I'm still playing this game" and "Go to the garage and buy me some Anadin - this

engine is

making me vomit"

would have been kinda cool.

In fact the Guidebot is much like the on-line help Bullfrog stuck into *Magic Carpet II*, so that those Americans with six fingers and low foreheads could understand the game. *Descent 2*, however, doesn't fall into the *MC II* trap - making the game too easy. The Guidebot moves fast and is a bitch to follow through winding passages. It also gets in the way in hyper-kinetic battles and has the talented ability to disappear just when you need it most. But it doesn't destroy the exploration and discovery element of the game and, if any thing it keeps you on track when all »



(Left) The graphical style ranges from very similar to the first game, to garish and brightly coloured vomo-vision.





is a swirling, rotatety mass of low-res texture maps.

#### 4) It must introduce new weaponry and power-ups.

Par for the course in making a sequel is, naturally, the appearance of many new clever bits of hardware the programmers have dreamt up. *Descent 2* features ten new 'things', plus the thirty odd collectibles from the original. You start with a bog standard laser as your primary weapon, and a bundle of concussion missiles as your secondary. The laser can be swiftly powered-up into a six-times strength, quad firing ninja weapon, or quickly swapped for the deadly Vulcan Cannon (machine gun) or Gauss Gun (machine gun with explosive shells). Alongside those are the Spreadfire cannon (crap triple fireball firing), the Helix (bit more special), the Plasma cannon (white-hot plasma balls), the awesome Phoenix cannon (like Plasma, but with ricocheting projectiles), and the gruesome twosome - the Fusion cannon and Omega gun, the latter of which is very, very, very cool indeed.

Among the secondary weapons are homing missiles, proximity bombs, the smart missile, and the EarthShaker (effect: obvious). Newbies among this lot are the Smart Mines, which explode and then cleverly pile flameballs in all directions, the Flash bomb - which stuns your opponents - and the Guided Missile. This is a bit of a weird one. You fire it and a 'missile cam' takes over your view screen, allowing you to steer the torpedo to its target and then let go when it's firmly *en route*. The missile-cam can be full-screen or relegated to a little box on your dashboard. All missiles now have this cam view, which can be very handy to fire inquisitively into darkened scary bits.

On the power-up side, most of the stuff has been inherited from *Descent*, plus a few new goodies. You still get a time-limited cloaking device, an Invulnerability sphere, extra life, energy

and shield power-ups. In addition there's a new and much needed FullMap collectable which gives you the full schematics of a level (à la *Doom*). You can also blag yourself an afterburner for quick strategic withdrawals (ie running away) and a headlight, which can be very handy if you've carelessly destroyed all the light bulbs on the level.

#### 5) It must unveil new, hideously clever monsties.

Oh and it does. *Descent 2*'s droids make the robots in the original look like slinkies (or Simple Simon electronic games, or Sinclair QLs - or any other piece of kitsch machinery you could pluck from the 80s). They're tough and clever. They dodge your rockets. They hear you coming and fire before you get there. They try to be sneaky and get behind you. They hide in corners and snipe. They go all invisible and then appear right on top of you (that might've been a bug).

(Below) What the bloody hell is going on here then? To say that both *Descent 2* and its predecessor could induce nausea would be something of an understatement. Imagine something like this in VR. Bleurk!



There are 30 odd new robots to deal with here. You roughly get a new monster per level (but those nasty programmers occasionally stick two or three in just to freak you out) and each one has a new weapon or a new technique to unsettle you. Some like the Diamond Claw try to ram you and cut through your hull. Others like the Smelter and SideArm are armed with high level laser weaponry. They pop round corners, fire a volley, and then whip off out of it. The Bandit is by far the most annoying. It moves at about a zillion miles an hour, collides with you, and then steals a bit of random weaponry. You then have to chase it, Benny Hill style, around the level to destroy it and get your stuff back.

On their own, most 'bots are easy to handle. But they have an uncanny ability to work well together. You can enter a seemingly empty cavern, only to find six Tactical Droids hovering near the ceiling, three Smelters sniping from the corners, two Diamond Claws buried





in the shadows, and then a slow-moving but deadly Fox AttackBot hidden in a secret passage in the floor. Not nice. Horrible, in fact.

#### 6) It absolutely must have new scary bosses at the end of each section.

It does and they are. Can't even begin to talk about them. Too scared. Too traumatised. They're bad. Believe me. And more frequent (one every four levels or so).

#### 7) It must sound to your neighbours like you have Wembley Stadium's sound system playing Star Wars and the Best of Bosnia BBC sound effects tape in your living room.

The sound is great. Each level is alive with industrial groans and clanks. Lava steams. Water gurgles. You clank hollowly if you bang into a wall. The

weapons make suitably sine-wave type noises. The explosions roar. The sexy voiced computer announces the self-destruct countdown (just like Aliens). Not quite as heartfelt or gritty as *Doom's* but satisfying and loud enough. There's also a load of Redbook audio on the CD (ie you can play it on a music CD player as well) featuring Ogre from Skinny Puppy who, we believe, are a 'popular beat combo' (*Er, hard rocking grunge act actually* - Ed)

#### 8) It must push level design to the limit.

There's more difficult geometry in *Descent 2* to get your stomach around (just a glimpse at the automap brings a retching sensation to the back of my throat). The levels aren't incredibly different to *Descent's*, but the first game's emphasis on claustrophobia - winding tunnels, tiny chambers, huge caverns which lead to micro alleyways, long cramped corridors - has given way

(Above left) The new tunnels are far more irregular than those found in the first game. This adds greatly to the claustrophobic nature of the whole game.

(Below) It's a vast, swirly, rotating bitmap thingy!



### Tech specs

**Memory:** 8Mb

**Processor:** 486DX/66 (P90 recommended)

**Graphics:** VGA, SVGA

**Sound:** All major sound cards

**Controls:** Keyboard, mouse, joystick

to a more complex and overlapping style of design.

The secret levels are very cool. Basically, they're just shopping expeditions. Packed with power-ups and weapons upgrades they follow the same pattern as the main levels - start, find keys, find reactor, blow it up, exit - but there are multiple routes to the reactor. Once you've committed yourself to one, you're stuck to that pathway, even though it may not be as bountiful as another. Ho-hum.

Incidentally, the secret areas on all maps are as tricky to find as ever.

#### 8) It must expand on its network/modem gameplay.

Interplay have really gone to town on this feature. *Descent's* version of Deathmatch (called Anarchy) was warmly received, but not as pathologically taken up as *Doom's*. Generally, the sheer 360 degree-ness of the engine denied *Descent* some of the immediacy and 'intimacy' (if that's the right word) of *Doom* Deathmatch. Also, it was much too easy for an experienced player to dominate the level, grabbing all the weapons and monopolising homing missiles and plasma cannons. To set this straight, Parallax have added a few new network play features.

Firstly, you're no longer limited to simple Anarchy or Co-op modes. You can now opt to play 'Capture The Flag' team games, where you can choose to take sides and co-ordinate tactics to overcome your rivals. Certain weapons can now be disallowed, and the game length can be limited by time or number of kills if you desire. Really good players (with really good joysticks) can be handicapped (you can set their shield strength right down to 10% which saves you going round and breaking their tibias) and, on the hardware side, improved packet handling means network, modem, games connection, and Internet play is all a lot smoother. There are also a bunch of new Anarchy levels to get you going. All in all, a big thumbs up for that one.







(Top) "And your specialist subject?"  
"The AutoMap on Descent And Figuring Out Where The Bloody Hell You Are In Relation To Everything else"

(Below right) Graphics: often a messy bourgoin of bitmaps. (This writer: often a pompous prat - Ed).

**« 9) It must support all those tossy new hi-res modes which nobody bothers using and only put on when their PlayStation-owning friends pop round.**

**PSX GIRL:** "Have you seen Tekken man? It's unbelievable."

**PC MAN:** "Yeah, but have you seen Descent 2?"

**PSX GIRL:** "Descent - isn't that the game which makes you ill?"

**PC MAN:** "Shuddup. Check this out [whops it into 800x600 hi-res mode]"

**PSX GIRL:** "Yah, looks OK, but it's a bit jerky."

**PC MAN:** "Yeah, er, that's because I'm running Windows 95, downloading stuff on the Internet, and rendering something in the background. Can you do that on your PSX?"

**PSX GIRL:** "No."

**PC MAN:** "Or this? [rotates through 360 degrees and blows loads of things up]"

**PSX GIRL:** "Wow, spooge. Man, I gotta sell my £300 PlayStation and by a £3500 P133 right now!"

**10) It must be compatible with those ultra-tossy VR headsets that only the Americans seem particularly interested in.**

Yep. To wit, support for: VFX-1, CyberMaxx, Virtual i/o, I-glasses, and 3D-Max. Use at your own risk. Playing on a monitor is stomach-gurgling enough.

**11) It must correct the faults of the original.**

As you may of gathered there's not a profound difference between Descent 2 and its predecessor. As we all know, a wealth of new features a good game



does not make, but Descent 2's modifications and enhancements are well-thought out and not as token as you would expect. All in all, Descent 2 is less, sort of, boring than the first one. The new robots give a Tales Of The Unexpected feel to each level - you know you're not just going to get the same droids, only more of them. The switches and forcefields add a much required puzzling element.

**12) If it has faults they must be reasonably acceptable ones.**

*The Thief Droid:* Nice idea but badly implemented. It's much too tough. It moves too fast and takes too many hits. You can end up wasting valuable time setting proximity mine traps and chasing it madly down corridors, trying to retrieve your stolen hardware. *Monsters Too Clever:* The robots are now a bit too brainy. They seem to be annoyingly aware of you through walls. And often pop out when its quite obvious they haven't seen or heard you. Some of end of level bosses are ridiculously hard to kill.

*Lives - Why?:* Descent still seems to insist on having old fashioned lives, even though you can save throughout each level. It's a waste of time. Everybody who's anybody saves compulsively. In multiple slots.

*The Nightmare Automap:* The map is still crap - over complex, badly laid out, and really hard to work out. You spend hours spinning it and zooming all over the place just to work out where you are in relation to somewhere else. They should shade each level, like contours,

so you can get some idea of your position.

*Too Hard Too Early:* The skill levels don't seem particularly well staged. I started the game on Hotshot level ('cos that's what I'm like) and just couldn't beat the boss on level four. And I'm no spring chicken. *Hostages - Why?:* These useless policemen-coloured guys are a waste of time and a distraction. You can't even shoot them. They were a pain in the first game too.

**13) It must capitalise on the coolness of its predecessor's gameplay.**

It does. It's fun and involving and addictive. And there's at least an hour's work per level. If you loved the first one, then you're going to get totally besotted with this one. If you liked the first one, then it may be the right time to progress from being 'friends'.

**14) It must be liked by PC Zone.**

Yep.

**15) It must be given a score.**  
Here you go. **Z**

**Score**

**90**

**I rather enjoyed playing it.**

**Price:** £TBC **Release Date:** March  
**Publisher:** Interplay  
**Tel:** 01628 423666



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When **Duncan MacDonald** was 12 he was given a piggyback by his chum, Jonathan. Both boys were armed with .22 Webley air pistols. Their mutual friend, William, was standing nearby. Could synchronicity be responsible for Duncan's latterday review of *Top Gun: Shoot At Will*? Who knows. (And who cares – Ed.)

# Top Gun



(Right) Take-off into the great wide open with the greatest of ease. If you've never flown an F-14 before, your know-it-all chum will tell you how. Don't you just hate back-seat pilots?



**I**MAGINE THE SCENE, A MICROPROSE/Spectrum Holobyte think-tank session. Someone's proposed an F-14 Tomcat simulation, and now the lads are chewing the cud...

**Bill:** What's the point? There are hundreds of F-14 sims out there already. Thousands even.

**Jim-Bob:** Don't exaggerate, I can only think of, er, seven.

**Brad:** I bet you're not including F-14 Lunchbox from ShonkSoft.

**Jim-Bob:** Okay, eight then.

**Buzz:** Eight, eh? So we'll need some sort of spin.

**Bill:** Yeah, but there's not much scope really, is there.

**Jim-Bob:** Yes there is! How about we set it underwater?

**Alf:** Eh?

**Jim-Bob:** Underwater! F-14 Aqua Wars!

"You thought it was hot in the air... but at 200 fathoms it's cool!" Or something like that. If water got inside your engines they'd sort of 'go out', so there'd be a special 'valve' or something – an upgrade. And you'd get depth charged!

**Brad:** Don't be ridiculous.

**Jim-Bob:** (Sulks)

**Buzz:** What about a movie tie-in?

**Alf:** Okay. Which one?

**Buzz:** How about *Top Gun*?

**Bill:** Hmm. It's a bit old, isn't it? Mind you, it'd be cheap.

**Buzz:** Exactly. And we could use a couple of the real actors, and do a sort of Origin approach.

**Bill:** Now you're talking. I'll get Paramount on the horn. (Picks up the phone and dials the number)

## Tech specs

**Memory:** 8Mb

**Processor:** 486DX/66 (P90 recommended)

**Graphics:** VGA/SVGA

**Sound:** SoundBlaster & Compatibles

**Controls:** Keyboard, mouse, joystick

**Paramount:** Hello, Jane speaking. How can I help you?

**Bill:** Hi. How much for the *Top Gun* licence?

**Jane:** Let me see. (She reads through a list) 120 bucks.

**Bill:** Excellent. Can you throw Tom Cruise in for another 50?

**Jane:** No, he still costs more than that. But we could let you have the bald one, and the one who very nearly played, erm, was it 'Pick-axe'?

**Bill:** Ice-man.

**Jane:** Whatever. We could let you have them for an extra \$30.

**Bill:** You've got a deal! (He hangs up)

**Brad:** What did they say?

**Bill:** Boys, we've got ourselves a game.

## Boring bastard...

"Dear PC Zone, I'm fed up with reading made-up conversations in your computer game reviews. I want the facts, plain and simple. If, for example, you are reviewing an aircraft simulation, I simply require details of the aircraft in question, whether or not the flight model is authentic, and a summary of the available ordnance. Yours sincerely, Mr PD Shakeshaft."

"Dear Mr Shakeshaft, it's fairly early in the review for this sort of information, but we'll deal with it immediately, nevertheless. The first point you should be made aware of is that *Top Gun* isn't a 'hard-edged' flight





## BRIEFING

Theater: Top Gun  
Mission: 01

Welcome to Top Gun Naval Weapons School. Your first exercise will cover basic flight systems including weapons. After a few aerial maneuvers, Floc will lead you through targeting and launching against several drones.

After that, you and Floc will engage in a 1-v-1 dogfight. Good luck.

<Print>



TAKE OFF



simulation, unlike, for example, *Su27 Flanker*, or, say *Tornado*. The main point, however, is that *Top Gun*, as a gaming experience, doesn't rely purely on sheer realism to invoke enjoyment because, and as you may have gathered from the 'made-up conversation' you cite in your letter, a certain filmic element is also involved. Spectrum Holobyte's intentions were to open up the flight simulation market somewhat, and appeal to both genre specialists (such as yourself) and casual gamers alike. To this end the F-14 in question can be as easy or as hard to fly as you care to make it (and on the full realism setting we're fairly certain that you'll be hard pushed to find fault).

So we now move, as you requested, onto the ordnance. Firstly we have the General Electric 20mm M61A1 Vulcan cannon, which can discharge 100 rounds per second. Moving on, we find the AIM-9M Sidewinder, a short range heat seeker, good for anything up to a range of five miles. Then there's the AIM-7 Sparrow, a slightly longer ranged

(Top) This is your base - lots of nice sandy beaches, cool surfing and aeroplanes abound.

(Top right) This is what happens if you try and put it in reverse without dipping the clutch at 400 mph.

(Above) The FMV is plentiful but never intrusive. This is what all interactive movies should be like.

(Below right) The planes all look fab. Who cares about what the ground looks like when you're thousands of feet up trying to shoot someone else down anyway?



radar guided missile, which requires the pilot to 'illuminate' the target until the missile detonates, making it less than the ideal choice when outnumbered from all sides. Luckily the F-14 carries the AIM-54 Phoenix, also radar guided, but without the need for the pilot to illuminate the enemy, and with a range of up to 50 miles. It's possible to kill your adversary before he even knows you're there.

The F-14 can also deploy a TARPS pod, which while not being ordnance, is worth mentioning. TARPS stands for Tactical Area Reconnaissance Pod System, and is a large sausage-shaped airframe which attaches to the underside of the fuselage, just starboard of centreline so it doesn't interfere with the tailhook. In the tip of the TARPS pod sits a KA-99 panoramic wide-angled camera, and behind this lies an AAD-5 infra-red scanner. The F-14's high speed low-altitude capabilities make it ideal for tactical reconnaissance.

You may be interested, Mr Shakeshaft, in the design history of the F-14. It was created as a backlash to the ill fated F-111 project, which, because of design flaws, was deemed unsafe for landing and taking off from aircraft carriers - which is deeply ironic, as this was the role it had been specifically designed for. Furthermore, the (*That's enough - Ed.*). Yours sincerely, PC Zone."

### Made-up conversation two...

(In a pub, somewhere in Cornwall)

**Seth:** Yer see those there inneractive compooter games, they be shit Oi reckon, all a-them.

**Mickey:** Oi agree. But ever-ones been sayin' they bin shit fur years now, ain't they. It ain't loike you'd be the first to spot it an' that.

**Seth:** Oi know... Oi weren't saying as how Oi was. But what Oi doesn't understand is woy them there compooter companies go on makin' them.

**Ambrose:** Oi bought one last week, Oi did. It were shit. Twas a space battle with spaceships, with laser weapons an' that.

**Seth:** Oi would of thought you would of looked that, Ambrose.

**Ambrose:** And Oi would 'ave, Seth, Oi would 'ave... but fur the fact it kept turnin' into a blasted film. Twas loike payin' 50 quid t'go to the ferkin' pictures. Oi would 'ave taken it baack, but bugger if Oi hadn't gurn and lost the blasted receipt.

**Mickey:** Oi reckons Oi know where they be goin' wrong with them things. It has all to do with the pace goin' up an' down the 'ole toime. The way Oi see it, if they should...

(Meanwhile, back at Spectrum Holobyte)

**Buzz:** ...And we want to keep the pace the same on both sides of the equation, which is why we're going for short bursts of intermission FMV, rather than that crap Hollywood-emulation stuff. All I want to know from you is whether or not we can have loads of talking heads during the missions, during the flight?

**Ponytailed Programmer:** Yeah? Like loads of talking heads? Man, that's cool! Faces! I can fill the freakin' screen with the things! You won't see nuthin' else! Cool man!







**Buzz:** No, you don't understand. We've got it scripted so that the player completes a mission, gets a quick FMV update scene, gets briefed real fast, and is back in the plane before the adrenalin and stuff has worn off. Okay so far?

**Ponytail:** Yeah. So what's with all these faces, man?

**Buzz:** (Sighs) Right. When the player's back up in the air, we want the conversations he experiences there - in game, as it were - to be as constant, enjoyable and enlightening as when he was on the ground. With me?

**Ponytail:** Er... go on.

**Buzz:** But all I need to know from you is whether you can include animated PIPs (just one at a time) without the frame rate dipping. And these digitised snippets are going to happen frequently, often during moments of intense action.

**Ponytail:** So you're asking, er, if I can stick talky faces in a small box, er, without screwing up the, like, bullets and explosions and stuff?

**Buzz:** That's right.

**Ponytail:** Of course I can, man. Chill.

### Boring bastard...

"PC Zone, your made-up conversations have gone too far. I insist you take these childish ramblings and condense them into some form of coherent perspective, or I shall be forced to reconsider my subscription. Yours angrily, Mr PD Shakeshaft."

"Dear Mr Shakeshaft, we can only apologise for your obvious distress. Hopefully the summing up paragraph (written in first-person, by the journalist responsible) will calm you down a bit. Yours apologetically, PC Zone."

(Above) This bloke should look familiar to those of you who've seen the film - those that can remember the film, that is.

### Summing up...

Top Gun is an excellent game, but to err on the side of caution I'd better mention a couple of bad points. Here goes... Firstly, regarding spacial awareness (especially the transition between 6000 and 5000 feet over undulating terrain), *Top Gun* can be a bit tossy. At times it seems like one sub-routine has suddenly taken over from another (which it probably has). Boo! Not nice! You crash into a hill that inexplicably looks much higher than it did a moment before, from above the cloudbase. (We're not talking EF2000 surface graphics, by any means.) The second problem is the frame rate in hires. It was acceptable on the office P133, sure, but only just. Lose some detail and you'll have slightly jerky fun on a P75. Below that though, unless you've got the patience of a saint and enjoy slide shows, we're talking lo-res: which includes pixels the size of Wales.

*Top Gun* is totally brilliant. Speccy Holobyte have pulled off what Origin (and god knows who else) have been trying to do for a millennium: and that's to add a cinematic storyline to a flight sim. The reason it works so well here is that the player doesn't lose his 'rhythm'. Let me explain. While weaving about in the air, shooting off all manner of missiles and what-have-you, the body produces chemicals, as you'll

know. (If I was a biologist I could probably name these chemicals, but I'm not, so I won't.) But anyway, if you were to come out of a hyper-tense mission (full of 'yes, yes, yes!' chemicals) and then had to sit through an over-long movie sequence, you'd kind of 'dry up'. Know what I mean? The pace would get messed up. It's stop start, stop start, stop start. Jagged at best, completely unsatisfying at worst.

With *Top Gun*, however, there's a smooth blending of two completely different art forms: partly because the not too lengthy inter-mission FMV stuff then follows you back into the cockpit, with in-game chatter that's both abundant and very nicely scripted. Atmosphere, with a capital 'A'. **Z**

### Score

# 92

It's completely interactive.  
There's a sort of movie too.  
And it actually works. Jesus Christ! Praise be to the Lord!

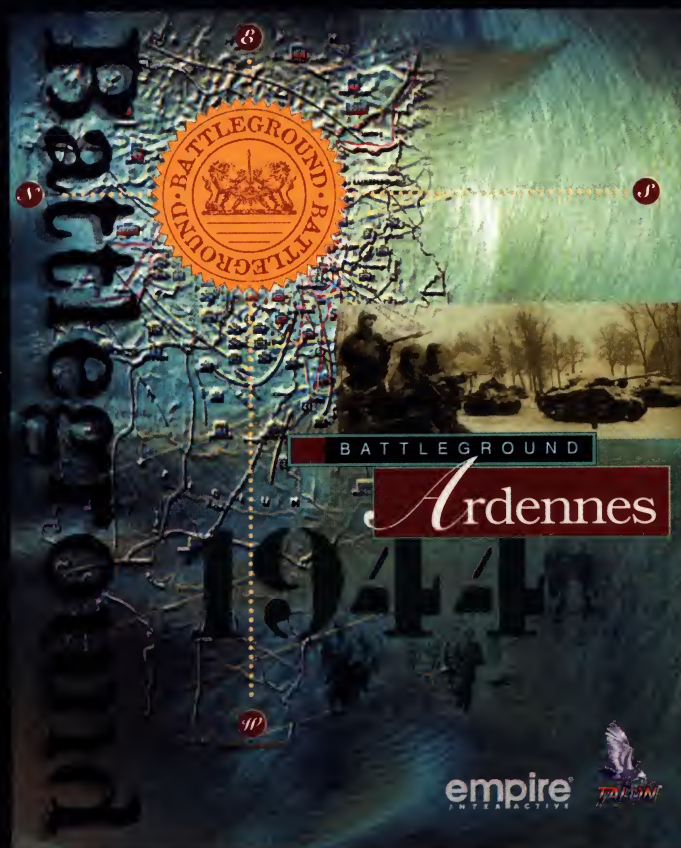
Price: £TBC Release Date: March  
Publisher: MicroProse  
Tel: 01454 326532

**GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."





# Battleground



*The fate of Europe turns on the Battle of the Bulge....*

## PC Zone

*Recommended "Seeing a game come to life like this really is pretty impressive... WOW! This is good"*

## PC Gamer

*"Challenging and entertaining enough to keep you at the frontline for many a week ...immense fun to play."*

## Strategy Plus

*"Ardennes is a fine initial offering from Talonsoft and a blast to play. Excellent graphics and animation, and sheer fun that drew in grizzled campaigners as well as green novices."*

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### AUTHENTIC

- ★Unrivalled historical accuracy and atmosphere
- ★Draws on WWII military maps, combat footage and battle audio
- ★Platoon-level action at 250 metres per hex

### FLEXIBLE

- ★Select Allied or German commands
- ★Range across key conflicts and terrains
- ★Manoeuvre, attack and defend
- ★Manipulate tank, artillery and infantry dispositions

### VERSATILE

- ★Dynamic computer opposition
- ★Modem vs. modem option for head-to-head play
- ★Full feature scenario editor
- ★Detailed SVGA Graphics

### PLAYABLE

- ★Effortless navigation
- ★Drag-and-drop movement, and point-and-click interface
- ★Print-out facility for instant detailed situation maps
- ★On-line indexed help

*Battleground: Ardennes ... Easy to play... difficult to master*



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The last time that Patrick McCarthy tried his hand at an extreme game, ten vice squad officers burst in and swiftly confiscated the hammer, nails and kitchen table.

# Extreme Games



(Left) Despite the unfortunate loss of his left leg in a collision with a tractor, Barry felt he was still in with a fighting chance.

## Tech specs

**Memory:** 8Mb

**Processor:** 486 (Pentium recommended)

**Graphics:** VGA

**Sound:** All major sound cards

**Controls:** Keyboard & joystick/gamepad

## Show us your extremities

*Extreme Games* was released on the PlayStation before Christmas, and is one of the very few psx games that supports a two-player split-screen mode. And it's a laugh. Basically, it's like a cross between two Electronic Arts games – *Road Rash*, in which you race down the highways of America on superbikes, whacking your unfortunate opponent as many times as possible over the knuckles and head with chains and lead pipes; and *Skitchin'*, in which you skate down the High Street on your fancy in-line skates, avoiding the traffic and looking a total dickhead in your crop-top T-shirt and

**A**mericans are bizarre people. In any other country a bunch of bored misfits who make up a stupid game among themselves just to while away the hours between psychiatric sessions would keep such an activity quiet, and the whole thing would eventually fizzle out as their medication increased. In America, it becomes a televised sport on cable tv.

So anyway... these sports are 'Extreme' (at least it's got an 'E' at the front and doesn't just start with an 'X', unlike most yoof-targeted titles). Which means

that they're sports played by Americans with bum fluff beards wearing suede plimsolls, who think that rebellion is refusing to take out the trash.

Mind you, if you fancy a genuinely extreme sport you could always try the one that was very popular at my mate's school in West London, which entailed dashing across the Westway flyover and dodging several lanes of traffic. This was responsible for the death of several children, but at least it was in the days before *Frogger*, otherwise I'm sure that computer games would've been blamed.



(Left) "Er, how many pull-ups do I have to do to make *Gladiators*, again?" asked Norman.

## Characters

You can take your pick from 16 different characters, all of whom have pre-set abilities, strengths and weaknesses. A typical character might be shit-hot at skateboarding and good at in-line skating, for example, but a bit of a no-hoper on a mountain bike, average at the street luge, and have poor stamina but good manoeuvrability. In practice, none of these skills makes any difference. We tested this, *Which?*-style, by making them all use skates, then selecting the best skater. Were they markedly slower? Did it improve our chances of success? Did it buggery.

Reggie Costa  
Height 6'2  
Weight 180







luminous jockstrap. It aims to combine the laughter-provoking violence of the former with the human-powered transportation of the latter.

### Transport tycoon

You can choose between four different methods of transportation: a skateboard, in-line skates, a mountain bike and a street luge. Just in case some of you have yet to come across a street luge, it's one of those tiny sledges that nutters use to hurtle feet-first down the Cresta run, looking between their toes and wearing an outfit made of sausage skin so that everyone can laugh at the size of their genitals in the cold wind. Only it's got wheels. Apparently, it's now a popular form of transportation in America – but of course everyone is better at life over there and we should copy them.

You'll find all the usual sort of stuff in *Extreme Games*: race against opponents over a season; win money to buy better equipment; amass points according to placings and the number of gates skated through – you know the score. There's one serious drawback though – there's no follow-on, so you can't move on to another, more difficult season and take your gains with you; nope, you have to go through a series of single seasons, starting from scratch every time.

Then there are a few illogical aspects to take into account, especially with the way the racers progress. You speed up by skating/peddalling or whatever, then go into a streamlined glide to go faster – but if you pedal or skate after that you lose speed, even when going downhill.

And the performance of the computer opponents often bears precious little resemblance to their supposed skills and weaknesses. But in spite of this the PlayStation version is still enjoyable, thanks to the excellent graphics and animation. (Basically, it's always a laugh to be totally reckless and send people spinning into tractors and walls.)

### The need for speed

However, the fact that the PlayStation version is actually quite good can't be said for the PC format, which really does suffer because of the speed at which it runs; even on a P133 with 24MB RAM it still ran slowly, the steering was sluggish and a jump seemed to take for ever – which has just got to be disappointing news for anyone with anything slower. And going back to the graphics... well, sorry but they just don't match up to the PlayStation version – even with the detail switched down, it's still slow, and you lose a major part of what makes it seem good in the first place. **Z**

### Fight! Fight!

One of the good aspects of the game is the fact that unfortunate things happen to computer opponents as well as yourselves – you can come round a corner and see five or six of them spread all over the side of a tram. They also spend as much time hitting each other as they do hitting you – which is always pretty much the sign of a good game. It's just a shame it's so slow, really.

(Left) ...And the last thing he said was, "Ooh, you can see the sea from here."



### The courses

In the majority of racing games the courses tend to become longer and more tortuous as you step up through the difficulty levels, but the ones in *Extreme Games* remain exactly the same regardless of the level you're at, be it Easy, Medium, Hard or (steady on!) Extreme. Instead, you get more and more 'stuff' to trip you up, block your passage (ooh-er), spread your nose all over your face and remove yards and yards of unsightly skin from all your limbs.

### Score

# 70

**Extreme Sloth, more like.**

**Price:** £29.99 **Release Date:** Out now

**Publisher:** Psygnosis

**Tel:** 0151-282 3000

(Below left) Trevor was about to find out how life would be with only one elbow.



**GATEWAY2000**

"You've got a friend in the business."



### Transport tycoon

Each of the four methods of getting about are suited to different terrain, and if you want to be all anal and tactical about it you can switch between them from race to race.

#### Mountain bike



Mountain bikes are the best form of transport for rough ground, such as in South America. I still don't understand how, on a long downhill section, you end up going slower if you pedal. Erm... excuse me, but surely that goes against all the known laws of gravity?

#### Skateboard



Everybody in the office who wears suede plimsolls prefers this mode of transportation because it reminds them of their youth spent on the concrete slopes of the South Bank. But they don't excel at anything, and you look a knob when you kick people.

#### In-line skates



These are the most convenient, because after a crash you don't have to run back to collect them, saving vital seconds. And the animation is the best – you can spin round obstructions, and punch and kick opponents. And as for skating backwards into cyclists in Regents Park...

#### Street luge



Street luges are fastest, but you need to be on a really smooth track to get the full benefit. And oddly enough, it's never quite explained how, on a street luge approximately three inches above the ground, you can knock a cyclist off his bike. Presumably you just jam your finger into their spokes. Or something. And how you manage to negotiate a jump is beyond me. But hell, what do I know?





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Brian Walker takes a look at the second in Empire's Battleground series. Can he really take the strain of yet another wargame?

# Battleground Gettysburg



**PC  
ZONE  
RECOMMENDED**



(Left) The game will run in super-duper hi-res mode and looks absolutely fabulous... it still looks like lots of toy soldiers running around on a cartoon map, but it does look fabby.

**M**ANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN predicting the death of wargames over the years, but far from dying, or even just fading away, they just keep on coming. The latest example is *Battleground Gettysburg*, the second in the series following on from *Battleground Ardennes* (reviewed in issue 35). The series was developed by the American company Talonsoft, headed by former Avalon Hill alumni Jim Rose. His background in wargames dates back some twenty-odd years to the days of punch-out counters and gargantuan rule books. His

expertise shines through in *Battleground Gettysburg*.

## More of the same?

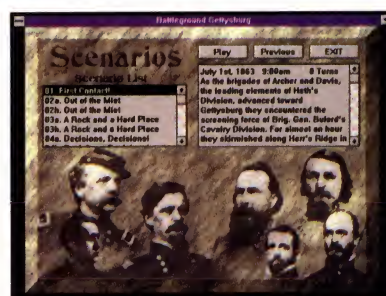
In common with *Ardennes*, *Gettysburg* takes advantage of the power of the PC to offer a stunning high-res 3D map and a half-decent artificial intelligence. And if that's not enough to satisfy you, a modem option is thrown in for good measure. But all this comes at a price: 130Mb of hard disk if you want to install the full Monty (in QuickTime movies), or a mere 60Mb otherwise. And yes, this is a CD-only game.



(Right) That'll be the area around Gettysburg then won't it? And... er, that's a big red square around a bit of it. The playing area is all pretty thoroughly researched isn't it?

The scenarios are based on the battles that occurred in the eponymous town between 1-3 July 1863, starting with the short (eight turns) First Contact, through to the mammoth Battle of Gettysburg (149 turns and a considerable chunk of your life). Apart from the latter, an 'alternative' and an 'historical' AI is offered; if you're interested in play balance I'd recommend the alternative setting, but beginners playing the Union side would probably be better off selecting the historical AI. Another option is the semi-automatic AI which takes over some of the supposedly menial tasks – but be that as it may I found that I wasn't too keen on troops who were supposedly under my command suddenly deciding to go for a unilateral wander.

The game's strategy revolves around troop management rather than any grand strategic plan (except in the case of the final battle). It's not really that exciting or challenging in this sense, but nevertheless it does grab your interest. This is due in part to the excellent feel the game has for the







(Above) Ooh, look Martha he's been running it in that old-fashioned Windows thing hasn't he? These wargamers, they're so retro aren't they?

(Above right) Some of the phases are interspersed with little digitised bits. Crikey.

subject matter; a case where good graphics have been used sensibly to enhance gameplay rather than replace it. There are no historical notes in the manual but the on-line help more than makes up for this. There you will find detailed descriptions of every scenario and each leader, plus a whole load of other stuff you never realised existed.

### Victory is ours!

Victory points for each scenario is based on a combination of unit losses and the seizing of victory hexes. A running score can be obtained from a pull-down menu, just so that you don't get any nasty surprises. Victory, or otherwise, comes in a total of five guises, from Major through to Minor. This gives the game additional play value, plus there's always the modem or null-modem option should you really tire of kicking computer ass. Not that the computer is a pushover – on defence, as in *Ardennes*, it does a good job of sorting the wheat from the chaff.

Turns are broken down into a series of alternate phases, and as the unit density is not that great in most of the battles, there's not a lot of hanging around while the computer has its go. Movement is regulated by the inevitable hex grid but this can easily be toggled off – wargame buffs will probably turn it on just for the sake of nostalgia, but the map is so pretty it deserves to stand out in its own right.

(Below) Bring out the big guns boys! We're going to blow up some of these blue and green hexagons.



### Playing with soldiers

The basis of *Battleground Gettysburg* owes more to miniature-based wargames than the board variety, and toy soldier fanatics will no doubt thrill to the tiny figures and cannons as they move about the terrain. A visual treat is thrown in here: during combat a series of QuickTime movies show the warring sides firing – and no, this doesn't get tiresome after a few turns. And to top it all, excellent sound effects complete this multimedia extravaganza. Unfortunately though, having said that, the units are tiny – in fact, without the zoom-in mode they are practically invisible. The map, however, is quite large, regardless of the resolution you are using, so finding the victory hexes can be a pain. There's an option to view these, but trying to gauge where your troops are in relation to them isn't easy. This is compounded by the lack of an auto-scroll function; it's either the Windows scroll bars or the Jump Map – a feature which brings up a strategic map. The interface is aided greatly by a floating toolbar of the type often seen in paintbox programs; you can give most orders from here by clicking on the appropriate icon, although I could have done without the Windows dialogue boxes that kept popping up. Moving and firing are both done via a series of mouse points and clicks, so there's nothing too taxing there, and all the elements you'd expect in a wargame are present: fog of war, zones of control, ranged fire, and so on.

And there's good news for newbies to strategy wargames – should it all prove a bit confusing, the manual supplied is a comprehensive affair that doesn't waste time getting to the crux of the matter. Add to this a Quick Start guide, and you'll be whistling Dixie before the game has even booted up.

The game runs very smoothly in Windows 95, though it is a compliant

rather than native application. It certainly has the advantage over the 3.1 version – multi-tasking is so much easier, a vital consideration if you're one those naughty types who plays games at work. All in all, *Battleground Gettysburg* is without a shadow of doubt the best Civil War game I've played. The subject matter might be a little esoteric for European tastes but the quality is beyond question. It's well produced and playable... what more could you want? **Z**

### Tech specs

**Memory:** 4MB

**Processor:** 486SX

**Graphics:** SVGA

**Sound:** Windows compatible sound cards

**Controls:** Mouse

**Note:** Requires Windows 3.1 or 95, and a CD-ROM drive; partial installation requires 60Mb hard disk space, full 130Mb

### Score

# 87

The second in the *Battleground* series, it's a worthy addition.

**Price:** £39.99 **Release Date:** Out now

**Publisher:** Empire Interactive

**Tel:** 0181-343 7337



**GATEWAY2000**

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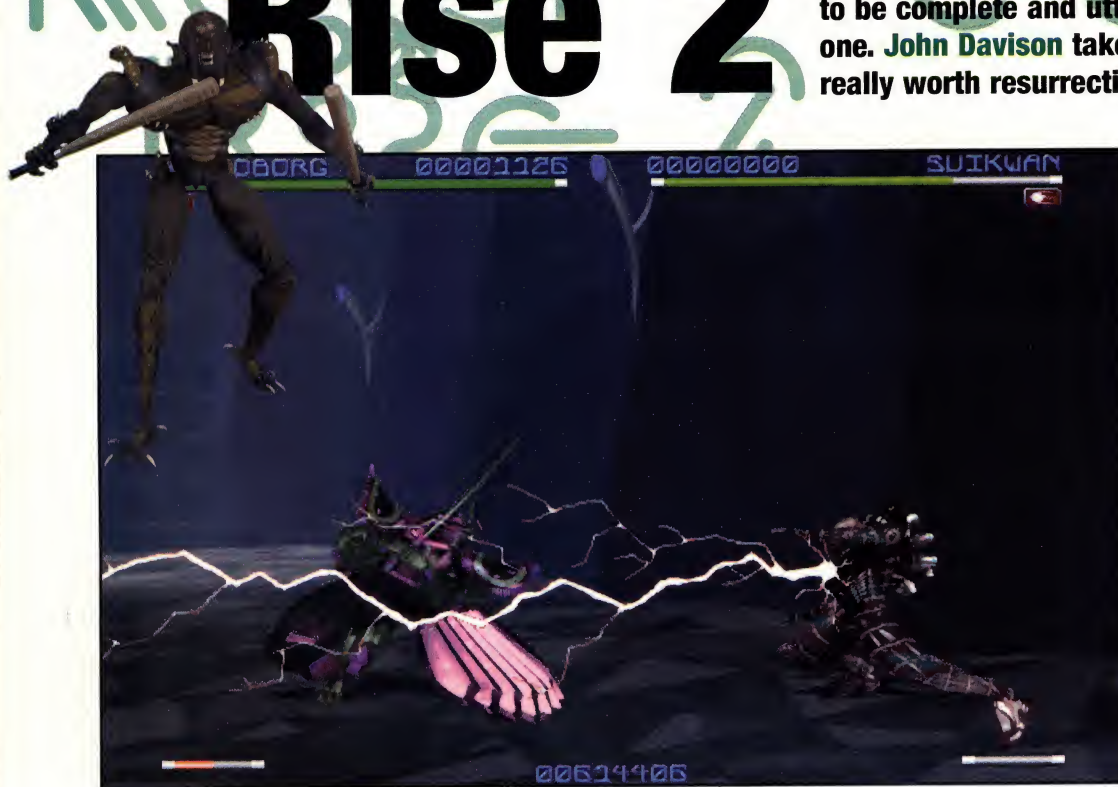
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# Resurrection: Rise 2

If ever there was a game that everyone expected to be complete and utter crap, this has to be the one. John Davison takes a look to see if it was really worth resurrecting the robots.



## Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX2/66

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Keyboard, joystick, Joypad (supports Gravis Grip multi-tap)

(which they've called Terminations) of *Mortal Kombat*, and the super-combo moves of Nintendo's *Killer Instinct*; it even has 'Progressional Moves' which allow you to build up new, super-special attacks by performing the normal boring ones a number of times, thus proving that you pretty much know what you are doing. Obviously you will need to have the dexterity of a double-jointed octopus to pull off some of the more ludicrous ones, but as far as features go, this has to prove that what we have here is er, almost everything.

In addition to the moves though, the game features all of the secret stuff that made many of the beat 'em ups on the SNES so popular. It's weird actually – the more you learn about *Rise 2* the more it

**W**HEN *RISE OF THE ROBOTS* WAS released it was the only beat 'em up on the PC of any consequence whatsoever. It

wasn't that it was particularly fantastic, it was just that at the time if you wanted to give anything a good leathering it was the only thing available. Unfortunately though, soon after it was released the PC games market woke up a bit and we suddenly found ourselves inundated with conversions of countless arcade classics which were more than acceptable; in a very short space of time poor old *Rise* ended up looking like a very naff game indeed. It sold by the bucketload (god knows how),

(Above) Graphically *Rise 2* is far superior to the first game. All the robots have been given a major facelift and the animation is far better.



but has been receiving a ritual kicking from just about everyone ever since.

A sequel had always been on the cards, and after a major shake-up in the development team and a drastic rethink on what makes a good beat 'em up, *Mirage* soon started work on *Rise 2*.

## A new beginning

By looking at what lots of other beat 'em ups had done particularly well, the new *Rise* team seem to have managed to plagiarise just about every well known game on the planet. Whereas the original was totally lacking in oomph, *Rise 2* has the projectile weapons of *Street Fighter*, the death moves



## In perspective

There are now loads of beat 'em ups on the PC, and *Rise 2* will fail to nibble at the better games' popularity.

Rise 2

Rise 1

Mortal Kombat

FX Fighter

## Vive la difference!

In case you only really care about what's different in *Rise 2*, here's a brief rundown of all the things that have changed – a sort of 'Readers Digest' guide to the game.

- A total of 28 different characters as opposed to only seven (ten of these are secret characters though).
- Characters now have bits that fall off them.
- There are now combo moves (some featuring up to 40 hits, *Killer Instinct*-style).
- Players can now turn around – hooray!
- Parallax scrolling backgrounds with interactive scenery.
- *Mortal Kombat*-style 'Death Moves'.
- Fireballs, projectiles, missiles etc.
- All characters now have a stupid number of special moves.
- All the voices in the game are actually Brian May.
- Ooh yes, so is the music.





comes across as almost a textbook example of 'what the kids want'. There are hordes of characters, as well as secret warriors for you to find – an extra ten, in fact. On top of this there are bonus levels and even bits of interactive scenery where bizarre objects fly across the screen and blow up in your face.

So if it's got all of this fab stuff, why is there a huge 'but' looming around the corner? It may sound absolutely lovely, and let's face it, those graphics are certainly better than ever, but all is not well...

### But...

A game can boast all the features in the world and still suffer in the gameplay department. The beat 'em up genre as a whole is becoming an increasingly crowded area, and when the shit comes down the only thing that anyone cares about is whether or not it has the ability to get you hooked. *Mortal Kombat* managed it, *Gametek's Super Street Fighter II* managed it – but above all *FX Fighter* proved that the PC could have its very own classic fighting game.

When you pitch *Rise 2* against this lot, it fares pretty well against the first two, but Jez San's classic 3D beat 'em up really has the edge.

It's all down to the way the thing makes you 'feel', I suppose. The sign of a really good beat 'em up is when someone is watching over your shoulder and says, "Christ, that must've bloody hurt!". But *Rise 2* fails to do this for two reasons.

Firstly, despite all of the special moves and fancy footwork that the characters boast, you never feel that a punch or kick is actually connecting – and this, after all, is a vital element in games of this genre. Secondly, who really cares if you give a robot gorilla with a rocket launcher up his arse a good clobbering? Thumping robots lacks the 'human' element that beat 'em ups rely on – there's none of that essential Bruce Lee ingredient that makes you scream "Wow!". At first glance, *Rise 2* is considerably better than its predecessor, and after playing it for some time I have to conclude that it is vastly superior. Unfortunately though, it's only really what we had expected of the original, and when you compare it to everything else it tends to fade somewhat. If you have a strange anime related fascination with robots fighting, apart from the fact that you should be locked up, you'll probably like it – but otherwise it has to be said that there are better games out there. **Z**



(Left) Although it looks great, you never really get the feeling that you've actually hit anything.

(Bottom) If you've got enough processor power all of the backgrounds now feature animations, interactive bits and parallax scrolling.

## Score

# 73

**Rise 2 is far better than the original, but still far from being a classic.**

**Price:** £44.99 **Release Date:** March

**Publisher:** Acclaim/Mirage

**Tel:** 0171-344 5000

**GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."



## Story stuff

The story to the first game was all pretty convoluted and, well, er, y'know, a bit crap. Robots were all going loopy because of some weird virus or other and you had to go in there, as a Cyborg, and kick the crap out of everyone.

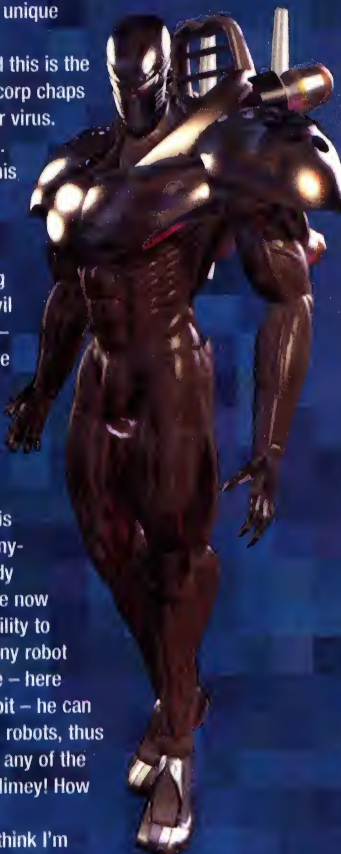
After the first game made its way into its very own decidedly tedious novel (uniquely titled – wait for it – *Rise Of The Robots: The Novel*) it seems that the Mirage chaps have gone utterly loony with the story to the sequel.

This time, it seems that the Cyborg (whose name was Coton, apparently !!?) actually failed in his pugilistic mission and the Supervisor ended up capturing him and downloading bits of his human brain to feed into her robot warriors. As a result, they're now all much more intelligent and have all developed unique personalities. Ho-hum.

To combat this – and this is the clever bit – the Electrocorp chaps have developed another virus. An 'Anarchy Virus'. Ooh. Freshly infected with this new amazing quirk of computer technology all of the worker robots are now thinking independently of the evil supervisor. As a result – quelle surprise – they're now beating the shit out of one another. Of course, as you would expect, this is where you come in.

It seems that Coton is actually still alive (yawn-yawn), despite his body being destroyed, and he now appears to have the ability to move his psyche into any robot that he chooses. Hence – here comes another clever bit – he can now fight as any of the robots, thus allowing you to control any of the fighters in the game. Blimey! How incredibly ingenious!

Well, after all that I think I'm going to have a little lie down now.





**Panzer General** was one of the greatest successes of 1995. Sadly, **Andrew Wright** wasn't. We decided to place them side by side in a vain attempt to see if some of the glory would rub off on him...



# Allied General

## Tech specs

**Memory:** 8Mb

**Processor:** 486DX/66

**Graphics:** SVGA

**Sound:** All major sound cards

**Controls:** Mouse

**Note:** Windows 3.1 or Windows 95 required

I'm tempted to say that not a lot's changed, apart from the interface, which has been enhanced, improved, tarted up and all those other rather long words people use to describe doing very little. And very little is the nub of it really – aside from it now being a Windows program with an improved look and feel, as far as wargames go there isn't enough new stuff to make it that exciting.

Okay, because it now runs under Windows, you can open several of them at once. This means that you can have the main scrolling map, the overview map that used to replace the main map when you wanted to get an overview, and help and unit information windows. As well as that you can run the program in any resolution you like; admittedly it does look pretty slinky at higher screen resolutions. All this goes without saying really, but bear in mind that using either Windows 95 or Windows 3.1 with the



(Right) The units and the terrain are lovely to look at. Drool.

ONE OF THE BIG SURPRISES OF 1995 was the success of an obscure World War II strategy simulation called *Panzer General*. It's even rumoured to be the top-selling game of the year in Germany, of all places, though it'll be interesting to see if they fall over themselves to buy the follow-up, *Allied General*.

I know it sounds more like a bank than a wargame but let's face it, all of the really good names have already been used (including anything with the word 'Panzer' in it for a start). Of course this is one problem we're going to have to come to terms with pretty soon. By my calculations, by the year 2000, nobody

will be able to think of a new name for their wargame/shoot 'em up/flight sim without several fruitless hours spent rooting round in a thesaurus...

Not that it's my problem. It's enough working out what's new in *Allied General*. Has it changed? (Apart from imagining yourself in uniform and a peaked cap barking out "Jawohl, Untersturmbahnführer!") So are you on the side of the angels? Or at least the Allies.

(Below) The light hexes show the unit's move radius and the yellow borders signify victory objectives. You can turn the hexsides on or off.

(Right) The irritating animations didn't last long on my system. Why do they bother?







special Win32S extensions (which are automatically installed by the set-up program) also means that you're going to need a fair amount of memory, at least 8MB, and probably more.

### No more Mr Nazi

Unlike the first game in the series, you only get the chance to play the Allied side, and instead of starting a campaign in a given year in the east or west, you have a choice of three main theatres: Africa, Europe or the Eastern front. As well as that there's the option to play either the British, Americans or Russians. This offers you a good selection though, as the tactics in each of the three theatres are very different and the game is weighted to give the German units their historical 'edge' – you'll find that even in the late war scenarios they still take some beating. Note that the Poles and the French don't get a look in – the European campaign starts in mid-1943 in Italy before moving on to Normandy and then Germany.

So what else is new? Well, instead of 38 pre-planned scenarios to play, you get 39. Yes, really. On the other hand, although some of them have the same names, they're quite different, so there's plenty of new stuff for *Panzer*

*General* veterans to try out, including a hypothetical invasion of Norway.

You can also keep your very own 'dossier' on your performance, or a personalised record of your achievements if you like.

which might be a boost to those out there with above average egos, but isn't really much use otherwise. One thing that really is worthwhile, however, is that moved units are now displayed in a different shade, making it that much easier to see what's what.

*Allied General*'s other big new feature is a complete range of play by e-mail facilities. These vary from standard fare such as password protection to more imaginative ones, such as the ability to add comments to your moves: when you replay your opponent's moves using the VCR-style controls, his comments are displayed at the same time. It certainly opens up some possibilities, although it's easy to imagine "My artillery has done jolly well, hasn't it?" degenerating into more abusive phraseology as things get a little desperate.

### Big Joke

The strange thing about *Allied General* – and its predecessor – is that to many wargame purists (well all right, anoraks), it's a joke. The units don't represent anything in particular, although the research into vehicle types and guns is accurate enough – it's just that you wouldn't get an entire formation made up of any one particular type of tank, gun or armoured car, especially the Germans because they took combined arms to the nth degree.

The ground scale is all wrong too, even varying from scenario to scenario; in some you've got one hex representing nearly 20 kilometres of front, in others less than three. And with only one unit allowed per hex, it's bloody ludicrous to imagine 20kms of contested front line being taken up by nothing but light armoured cars, for example, or a handful of two pounders.



(Above) Voilà, the menu. Mine's a lightly roasted Leningrad with a touch of Tunisia please.

### Realism versus gameplay

The idea of anti-tank guns attacking infantry is equally daft – British guns didn't even have an effective HE round. Being allowed to disband doomed units is absurd, too. I'm trying to imagine the scene at Arnhem bridge: "Er, Johnny old boy, we've decided to disband your paras so that Jerry won't gain any prestige from wiping you out." "Very good, sir. Where shall we leave the equipment...?"

I'd go on and on about the level of realism (*He certainly would – Ed.*) but for one thing – *Allied General* is one of the best games I've played for a while. It's got that indefinable air of something about it, that star quality that makes games tick along until the hands on the clock get so far round it's almost time for breakfast. In case you hadn't noticed, I'm struggling to avoid using the hackneyed term 'gameplay' but in the end, that's what *Allied General* has got. Tankfuls of the stuff.

*Panzer General* deservedly became a firm favourite not only with wargamers but with casual gamers too. Okay, *Allied General* may well be *Panzer General* in new clothes but it's a brilliant game with just the right number of rules and buttons to push. Simplistic, yes, but there's far more to it than most. **Z**

### Score

# 83

**Panzer General 2 with extra knobs and no swastika.**

**Price:** £44.99 **Release Date:** Out now  
**Publisher:** SSI/Mindscape  
**Tel:** 01444 246333





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**Patrick McCarthy loves to watch large men running about in their underwear with big balls. Naturally, we gave him etc etc.**

(Above) Virtual Stadium technology has the unfortunate problem of making all of the people in the crowd lie down. Maybe it's a really boring game?

# NBA Live 96

## Tech specs

**Memory:** 8Mb

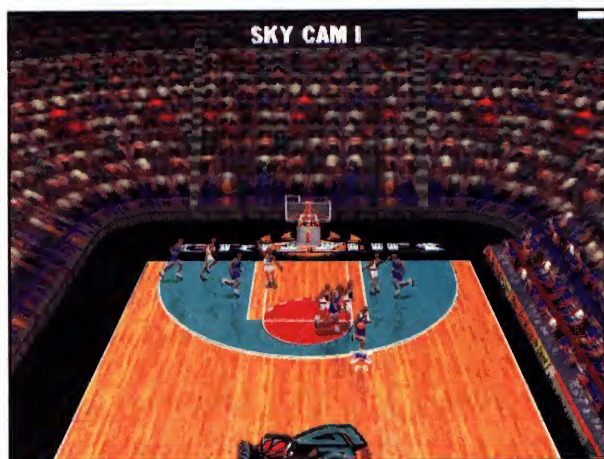
**Processor:** 486DX/33

**Graphics:** SVGA

**Sound:** All major sound cards

**Controls:** Keyboard, joystick, joypad

(Below) There are lots of different camera views, but some of them have a tendency to ignore certain important factors... like actually being able to see what's going on!



**B**ASKETBALL IS THE ONLY 'AMERICAN' sport that actually originated in America. American football, for example, is just rugby for people who are too impatient to pass the ball backwards all the time. Baseball, so often written about by sentimental US sportswriters as the epitome of all that America stands for, originated here in England, too, and even gets mentioned – as “base ball” – in the first chapter of the classic novel *Northanger Abbey*.

Ice hockey originated in Scandinavia (originally played by Viking hordes with the stiffened, severed legs of their conquered foes for sticks and the top off a jar of rollmop herrings for a puck). But basketball was invented in America, by one Elmer Basket. Basket, freakishly tall thanks to being injected with Baby-Bio as a child by an irresponsible parent with nothing better to do, invented the sport solely to humiliate his vertically-challenged friends. Nailing an orange crate high up on the wall of the local gymnasium, he would spend countless hours plopping an inflated buffalo bladder into it and shouting, “Two points!”. Later, to encourage a more open game, he began standing further away and throwing it in, shouting, “Three points!”. Thus was basketball born.

Electronic Arts are no stranger to basketball games – or sports games in general, come to that. In fact over the years, they've become to sports games what Anthea Turner is to the lottery: inextricably linked in the eyes of the public. If you count up their basketball titles alone, the total number released, across every format, including annual upgrades, comes to 3,287. So they should know what they're doing by now.

## Options

There's more than one way to fry pork fat, as my old mother used to say before she gave up her health food shop, and there's more than one way to play *NBA Live 96*. There are three levels of difficulty and you can play exhibition games or a full 12,000-game season (approximately).

Or you can cheat a little, and go straight for the play-offs. Don't get too excited though, you won't be straight through to a semi-final. In the true American way, administrators like to get as many teams as possible through to the play-offs to keep those fans rolling in and maximise television advertising revenue for as long as possible. In the case of basketball, this means... er, basically everyone gets through.

Well almost. Anyway, you can play in Arcade mode or Simulation mode, or you can select Custom, choosing which rules you're going to play by. You can switch them all on or off, including backcourt violations, travelling, fouling and charging, the 3-seconds in the key, 5-seconds in-bound and 10-seconds half-court rules, and even the out-of bounds rules (at this point I suppose I should apologise to confusing non-basketball fans with the game's terminology here, but well, what the hell).

## Teamsters

Every NBA team is available, and EA have done a reasonable job of making the more recognisable players in each squad... well, recognisable. Anyone with a shaved head, for example, actually has a shaved head. And players are different heights (ranging from exceptionally tall, through to absurdly tall to inhumanly tall). Tattoos, moles, shaving cuts and other distinguishing features are too small to tell whether they're accurate representations. There's also the usual range of divisional All-Star teams, along with teams who typify, if you will, a



## Feeling a little flat?

The crowd are certainly a noisy bunch, cheering, oohing and aahing and generally making sure they get their money's worth of interaction. Which is surprising, given that they seem to be made up of cardboard cinema display figures bent backward at the knees.

certain style of play or philosophical outlook: Stealers are a team consisting of profound believers in the notion of the redistribution of wealth; Blockers are a team who subsist entirely on constipation-inducing foodstuffs; and so on.

## Presentation

EA have opted once again for TV-style presentation, and as we've come to expect, it's immaculately put together: voice-overs introduce the 'show', and photographs of each team's starting line-up are displayed – unfortunately though, these don't come with suitable comments. It could have done with stuff along the lines of, "Madeupname Smith may have the highest three-pointer percentage in the league, Bob, but he is one ugly son of a bitch." Ah well. In-game music is suitably funky and there are frequent snatches of music during the game itself, as though played over the PA system, which all adds to the atmosphere. You even get trivia questions at the half-time break.

And the game itself incorporates EA's ubiquitous Virtual Stadium technology, which means up to four different angles for each camera. Sadly, the televisual presentation doesn't extend to the game being interrupted at crucial moments to show advertisements for haemorrhoid treatments, but you can't have everything.



## Flaw show

What with all the fancy presentation, first impressions are very good. And when you start playing, you find that the game is fast (if a little 'slippery') with intuitive controls, reasonably well-animated player sprites, as well as being playable in both one- and two-player modes. (It's even playable using the keyboard.) Potential basketball fun galore, in fact. The in-game graphics, however, are a bit muted and 'Habitat', and the 'crowd', frankly, looks laughably flat – a common problem in Virtual Stadiums, it seems. It's also sometimes hard to see who has the ball when the game gets crowded under the hoops, and against the computer, especially, this usually means you end up conceding points and missing rebounds. These graphical shortcomings aside, though (which is ironic given the emphasis placed on the Virtual Stadium presentation), NBA Live 96 is still a good game. **Z**

(Above) The game's graphics are simply stunning throughout, with shadows and reflections adding tremendously to the overall look of the thing.

(Below) As you can see, all the presentation screens are suitably attractive and feature 'appropriate' images.

(Below left) All of the graphics are pretty authentic and NBA approved images.



## Scrap! Scrap!

It's nice to see that Electronic Arts have introduced a more accurate representation of the level of violence in basketball. No longer are you restricted to girly attempts at snatching the ball from opponents: you can now give them an elbow in the teeth, or a nasty hi-top to the nads, or whatever, and send them crashing to the deck. Much more like the real thing, although knives still seem to be kept firmly in waistbands.

## Score

# 85

Graphically a bit flawed, but darned playable.

Price: £44.99 Release Date: Out now  
Publisher: Electronic Arts/EA Sports  
Tel: 01753 549442

**GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."

## Free throws

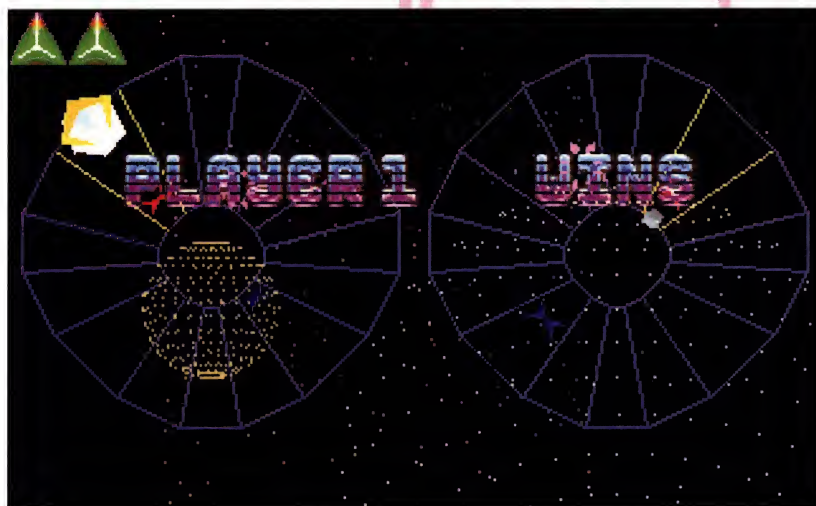
Get fouled in the act of shooting and of course it's straight off to the free throw line, where you'll be presented with this cross-shaped target – variations of which have been around since *Lakers vs Celtics*, all those years ago on the Mega Drive. The ball moves sideways across it, then up and down, at a speed dependent on how good the fouled player is at shooting. The idea is to press the fire button at the target's centre each time. Aim a bit skew whiff though and the ball bounces off in the wrong direction, provoking another fierce bout of fisticuffs among the waiting behemoths. Get it right and your salary goes up by another million dollars.



Remember way, way back in the days when you would try and wear your fingers down to the first knuckle on *Space Invaders*? Well, they're back. **Rob Tribe**, blessed with more knuckles than the average humanoid, goes tip-tappity crazy finding out why.



# Tempest 2000



**W**ERE COMPUTER GAMES EVER this much fun? So little in the way of controls, yet so many hours spent hunched in front of a flickering screen trying desperately to notch that high score just a couple of points past your last.

Pacman, Asteroids and even *Space Invaders* (the game that started the whole thing), were so simple that we take one look at them today and laugh out loud. These days we think it so clever that we can take a technology that used to need so much computing power it resembled a table in a pub, and stick it at the front end of games as a diversion while the main feature is loading. Oh yes, we may snigger now, but back then big bucks were being slotted into tables in pubs all over the world, and happiness was only achieved when the mothership finally took a flaming dive earthwards.

And then, just to prove that these games aren't half as laudable as we all like to think, along comes *Tempest 2000* from Atari. In its first incarnation it was simply called *Tempest*, and the aim was to defend your tunnel in space. We all

have 'em (er, tunnels in space that is), it's just that some of you haven't been made aware of it yet – but don't fret if you missed the original 1981 version because it's included on this CD.

## It just gets better...

Fifteen years on and we have *Tempest 2000* marking Atari's entrance into the PC games market; it's been revamped, all the polygons have been filled in and a kicking techno track has been added, but the most important aspect – endless hours of playability – remains mercifully intact. The basic features remain exactly the same: you're poised ready for action at one end of a long tunnel with various ships flying at you from the other end.

However, unlike the Channel Tunnel, where trains only arrive on one track and are a hell of a lot easier to pick off with a particle laser, your space tunnel has many tracks, all of which can carry a message of impending doom right into your face. Your job is to pick them off one by one, collect the bonuses that they give up on their death, and make it to the next level. Sounds easy, huh?

## Extra, extra – read all about it

As well as the original *Tempest*, this CD-ROM also contains *Tempest Plus*, where you can select your own power-ups before going into battle, and *Tempest Duel*, where you can fight it out for domination of a tunnel with a friend. Four bloody great games on one disc – now that's what I call value for money.

(Left) When it comes to playing your mates, remember – no mercy. Failure might mean you can never show your face in public again.

Yeah, maybe... except that the speed and number of craft you have to destroy add a sense of danger somewhat similar to dodging bullets in South Central LA.

But there's one notable difference between *Tempest 2000* and the original: this time round you can earn bonuses. The first one to aim for is a bigger, faster gun (believe me, you'll need it), and after that I'd recommend you try and pick up an artificial intelligence droid as it will be an immense help in your clean-up operation. However, when you advance to the next level you lose all these and have to start all over again – what can I say? Life's a bitch. **Z**

## Tech specs

Memory: 2Mb

Processor: 386DX/40

Graphics: VGA

Sound: SoundBlaster and compatibles

Controls: Keyboard, joystick

## Score

# 85

Classic arcade fun.

Price: £29.99 Release Date: Out now

Publisher: Atari

Tel: 01753 533344



**GATEWAY2000**

"You've got a friend in the business."



(Left) Power-ups are the only way forward. Watch out for them constantly, but don't lose sight of what's happening on screen.

(Far left) Choose from all of these fabulous games. Or return to the previous menu – whatever turns you on.



You just entered hostile territory  
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# Sega PC



**L**ET'S GET ONE THING STRAIGHT right now. I used to love my Sega Mega Drive. I bought it just as *Sonic the Hedgehog* came out. Being a student at the time, I had nothing better to do than sit around, wearing only a dressing gown, in a poky, smoky flat playing *Sonic*, *Road Rash*, or *ToeJam and Earl* until four in the morning. Oh all right then... that isn't *all* I did. I went outside once. But I digress.

Anyhow, at the time, I thought the Mega Drive was fantastic. Then I got hold of a Super Nintendo. Hoorah! It was even better than the Mega Drive! Long live *Mario Kart*! Then one fateful day when I actually got my shit together and saved up enough money to fork out

for a PC. Oh dear. The Mega Drive ended up covered in a thick layer of dust. Eventually I lent it to a friend, who accidentally broke it. I cared not a jot. The SNES hung around for quite a bit longer, but eventually that too went to a better home. I had PC games now, and I was spoilt. PC games had better graphics, more involving gameplay, and took longer to complete. The one thing they were always lacking was that *immediate* action that the consoles positively oozed.

## Long live the PC!

Bingo. Then along comes *Doom*, and everything changes. More and more action games appear. Bingo again.

Along comes the Pentium. More impressive action games appear.

Now it's 1996. There's a tidal wave of 3D accelerator cards headed our way. PC games are competing head-on with an all new range of whizzy 32-bit 'super consoles'. Some of the new titles due out this year are light years beyond anything that's gone before.

Which is why it's a little bit odd that Sega have decided that NOW is the time to release a range of Mega Drive conversions for the PC. But that's exactly what they've done. Oh, and by the way - thanks to a cross-promotion with Intel, you're going to need a Pentium to play any of them. Gee whizz.

The conversions themselves are as perfect as you'd expect, when you consider that a Mega Drive costs about 28 times less than a low-spec Pentium. Take *Ecco The Dolphin*, for example. The scrolling and sprite movement achieve that slick-as-shit hardware-assisted console feel. The eerily realistic way in which the dolphin reacts to your gamepad remains intact. It's *Ecco* just as it was on the Mega Drive, but it runs under Windows. And that's about all there is to say about it. All the conversions do what they purport to do, ie turn your Pentium into a Mega Drive, but I can't imagine who these games are aimed at.

## Tech specs

**Memory:** 8Mb

**Processor:** Pentium only

**Graphics:** VGA

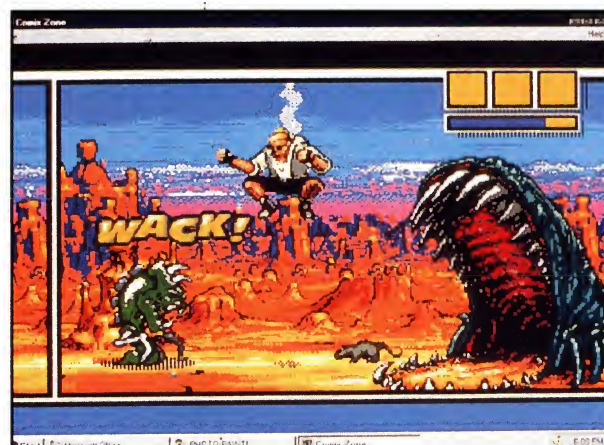
**Sound:** Windows compatible sound cards

**Controls:** Keyboard, joypad

**Note:** When they say Pentium only... they mean it. Windows 3.1 or 95 required

(Above left) *Ecco The Dolphin*: bring back Flipper and carve this one up into a nice can of Skipjack.

(Below left and right) *Comix Zone*: save the cartoonist trapped in the comic book? Nah, let him suffer for his art.





# Games

Sega's busy converting a selection of console 'hits' into Pentium PC titles. Have they gone barmy or is there some logic to their madness, asks fruitcake Charlie Brooker.

If you've got a Pentium, you'll be too far busy playing some of the most cutting-edge software around to bother looking at these old 16-bit conversions. And if you haven't got a Pentium, and you fancy a bit of simple arcade action on your PC... tough. They won't run. Fantastic.

Having said that, if you're a Pentium-owning arcade fan, you might want to check some of these titles out – although it has to be said that none of these initial releases are timeless classics, and besides, you'd be better off picking up a second-hand Mega Drive (check your local paper), which shouldn't cost more than about £45, probably with a couple of games chucked in. If you're a seasoned PC gamesplayer, they're unlikely to hold your attention for more than five minutes in this polygon-spinning, texture-mapping, wild and wacky modern world we live in.

## Ecco The Dolphin

*Ecco The Dolphin* was released to major critical acclaim. Some of the gaudier console mags (you know the type... bright orange fonts against bright green backgrounds, loads of photos of the reviewers wearing baseball caps and holding their thumbs aloft – *Granta* it is not) even went so far as to name it "the best game ever". *Ecco*, they said, was a ground-breaking departure from the console gaming norm. And it was brilliant fun to boot.

Well, that's what *they* said. What *I* say is this: *Ecco The Dolphin* was, is, and ever shall be... a bit of a bore really. The dolphin animation is very pretty. I grant you, but as for the game itself – Christ,



(Left) *Tomcat Alley*: a classic combo from the days of yore – jerko-vision in full GrainiColor™.

what a chore it is. Swim over here. Swim over there. Push that rock under that thing. Push it the other way. Find that crystal. Mow the lawn. Do the dishes. Walk the bloody dog. No thank you, Sega.

## Comix Zone

Aha! A little more contemporary, this – it's only recently appeared on the old 16-bit console itself. *Comix Zone* is an imaginative update of the *Final Fight*-style perambulating beat 'em up. You play the part of a cartoonist trapped inside a comic book. Each stage in the game represents a panel in the comic. You walk along and beat a lot of people up and that's more or less it. It's a bit like being a yob in a market town at closing time.

There's some snappy visuals, a smidge of classy animation, and on the whole it's addictive, if simple, fun. Nothing really new, though.

## Tomcat Alley

An absolute ploppler, this one. And it wasn't even any good on the Mega-CD itself. We're piloting a fully-armed fighter jet through FMV land here, folks, and you know what that means. That means loads of terrible, repetitive gameplay, that's both easily dispensed with and far too tedious to return to at a later date. It barely warrants description. If you want to feel like Tom Cruise that badly, join the Scientologists and move to LA. Just don't buy this. **Z**

## Ecco The Dolphin

# 55

Fish-faced, easy on the eye, and deathly deathly dull.

Price: £29.99 Release Date: Out Now  
Publisher: Sega Tel: 0171 373 3000

**GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."

## Comix Zone

# 68

*Final Fight*, Marvel style and ever so slightly snorey.

Price: £29.99 Release Date: Out Now  
Publisher: Sega Tel: 0171 373 3000

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## Tomcat Alley

# 34

Yuk. Ergh. Poo. Go Away. Shoo, do you hear me? Shoo!

Price: £29.99 Release Date: Out Now  
Publisher: Sega Tel: 0171 373 3000

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# Ian Botham's International Cricket 96

**Y**ou have no idea what critical comments this game generated in the office from passers-by. A copy of Jeffrey Dahmer's *Illustrated Cookbook* Interactive would have prompted less abuse. The trouble is cricket, unlike football, isn't trendy. People who wouldn't say a word about a golf or baseball game — both slower-moving than Jan Molby after six pints of Benylin — were contemptuous of the world's noblest, if not fastest-moving, sport. Someone should encourage Nick Hornby to write a book about cricket, then we wouldn't be able to move for born-again cricket lovers.

## A game of four halves

This was released on the SNES last summer. Still haven't turned the page? All right then: you can play Test and One-Day matches (both played right through without 'breaks' — so you'll have to make your own) and all the major Test-playing nations are represented. The players all have fictional names, but you can more or less work out who they're supposed to be — apart from the proficient English spinners, who obviously have no basis in fact.

It isn't as playable as the SNES version, and the graphics don't seem as clear. And what the SNES version didn't have was the world's cheapest and tackiest



FMV footage: some weedy twerp who looks like his arms would snap under the weight of the bat pops up after you hit boundaries, waving the bat about ineffectually; pretend commentators — and Beefy Botham himself — make 'humorous' remarks which are about as entertaining as thrombosis. This crap is responsible for an ex-16-bit cartridge game requiring 60MB of hard disk space, and it's a complete waste of time.

## Shot-making

The controls were never perfect on the SNES version but at least they worked seamlessly; controls for this version are

## Tech specs

**Memory:** 8Mb

**Processor:** 486/33

**Graphics:** VGA

**Sound:** All major sound cards

**Controls:** Keyboard, joystick, mouse

**Don't turn the page... Patrick McCarthy wants to tell you about a cricket game... cricket's really 'cyber'... honest. Oh, suit yourself.**

(Above left) Beefy Botham, star of stage, screen and now computer game. And dead witty, to boot.

(Below left) Those wacky Australians and their amusing duck animations make friends the world over.

more halting and intrusive. There are extra button presses and huge directional arrows on-screen, which not only slow things down while you select them, but tell your opponent what you're selecting.

There are only four different strokes to play (on or off-side, straight or defensive block), with the actual shot played depending on where the ball is when you press the button. So you might lift the ball over long-on, or hook it over square leg, according to your timing, which can be very satisfying but can also mean that you play a shot somewhere other than intended — especially pleasing when you get out doing it. Sometimes the ball dynamics leave something to be desired: the ball flying off somewhere extremely unlikely — for example, spooning a catch to mid-wicket while mistiming a square cut. Unlikely, you have to say. Still, that's computers.

Essentially though, it's playable and a laugh, especially against another human opponent. But taking catches is best left to the computer, and it would also be more realistic if every bowler couldn't perform every delivery. The only other problem is the temptation to go mad during a Test, stop playing patiently and start lashing out like Alec Stewart on speed, which can lead to Tests finishing, in overs terms, at the equivalent of 11:30 on the first day.

## Score

# 78

**The best in a sparsely populated field.**

**Price:** £34.99 **Release Date:** Out Now  
**Publisher:** Beam Software  
**Tel:** 0171 490 1326

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Duncan MacDonald couldn't think of an intro for this review of *Big Red Racing*, so he phoned his mum to see if she had any ideas: "No, and have you sent your nan's birthday card yet?" she said. He said that he had, hung up, then rushed to the Post Office, via the Card Shop.

# Big Red Racing



**H**OW ABOUT I START by stating the painfully obvious stuff first, so we can get it out of the way.

Okay then... *Big Red Racing* is, in a world that already has more PC racing games than it can know what to do with, yet another PC racing game. It contains all your standard 'single' races, your standard 'tournament', and your (these days) standard multi-player option: up to six on network, or two using the serial cable or split-screen method.

Now to the not so obvious stuff. Like, for instance, the fact that *Big Red Racing* is completely out of its tree. Games often contrive to be quirky, I know, and it can be pretty bloody irritating (rather like those stupid people who say "I'm really mental, me!" when they're clearly stultifyingly 'normal'), but somehow with *Big Red Racing*... well, let me illustrate.

## Game for a laugh

There I was, alone in the PC Zone office on a cold Sunday afternoon. I'd already entered a slightly tangential dimension due to spending too much time faffing around on the BRR options screen, which is presented in a sort of technostyle *Rhubarb & Custard*-o-vision: wobbly wobbly letters, hillbilly sound-bites.

Once I'd got the joystick sorted out, however, I was able to escape from this headache inducer into the game itself. Much time passed. I eventually realised what I was actually doing - which was racing round a giant quarry in a jcb, trying desperately to overtake a dumper truck. Just two hours into *Big Red Racing* and I was more than ready for the men in white coats to take me quick-smart to the Laughing Academy.



Here are just a few of the other vehicles available: a six wheeler ATV, a Florida 'swampmaster' semi-amphibious propellor boat thingummyjig, a Citroën 2cv, a snow plough, a tracked doofer like Scatman Cruthers drove in *The Shining*, a bigfoot monster truck, a large Yank rig (in other words the front bit of a lorry), and a couple of different helicopters.

Onto the courses then, of which there are 24 - and they're massive. And they undulate like nobody's business. There are deserts, rocky highlands - you name it. Furthermore, you can drive (or fly) absolutely anywhere you want, which can (and frequently does) result in you getting completely lost. But ultimately, as you get to know your surroundings better, you begin to create your own shortcuts (the only pre-requisite being that you have to be on-course enough to pass between the occasional checkpoint markers). There's a Moon course, a Mars course, and a Venus course, too. And of all the 21 Earth courses, I'd like to say a special 'thank-you' to the Italy track: it's a tribute to the movie *The Italian Job*, so naturally you drive a Mini. At one point there's a coach (just scenery, I did try ramming it off but it wouldn't budge), hanging perilously over the edge of a cliff. You race down steps, across plazas, through sewage pipes. Excellent.

## And finally...

The graphics in *Big Red Racing* aren't as 'flash' as they might be, but having said that you can always see miles in front of you, so maybe it was a payoff (in which case I think I'll backtrack and say that the graphics do their job admirably). The sound's good too, if a little sparse. If there's one thing that does worry me, it's the fact that during moments of carnage (loads of vehicles, loads of dust and loads of scenery on screen simultaneously) the frame rate chugs a bit...

and that's on a P133. As is always the case, take the manufacturers' minimum hardware requirements suggestion and then, er, 'double' it.

All that remains for me to say is that overall, *Big Red Racing* is a hoot. And an extra special final mention has to go to the water courses: select the powered inflatable boat and believe me, you'll be in seventh heaven. It's rather like playing *Micro Machines*, but in a first-person perspective. (But if you've never played *Micro Machines* that comment won't mean much to you, obviously, but if you have you'll know why I added it.) **Z**

## Tech specs

Memory: 4Mb

Processor: 386

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Keyboard, mouse, joystick

## Score

# 87

**A seriously wacky racing game with enough tracks to keep you busy for days.**

Price: £TBC Release Date: March

Publisher: Domark

Tel: 0181-780 2222

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There are games that are addictive that you just can't let go. And there are those that are addictive and flawed, so much so that you're torn in two directions at once and end up wanting to punch the programmers. **Tim Ponting** has now split into two one-legged men and wants *Mindscape* to come and have a go if they're hard enough.

# Warhammer:

## Shadow Of The Horned Rat

**T**HE ORCISH WAR CRY "WAAARGGGH!" seems to lose something in the translation into English. It reads rather like a small baby falling out of a cot rather than a 320 pound beast with a battle axe and brain the size of a pea. *Warhammer: Shadow Of The Horned Rat* is a game positively bursting with little green creatures shouting "Waaargh!", and even "Waaaaaargh!" occasionally. All of which frequently has your own rather more intelligent little men running away looking for toilet paper – and none of them know how to play a tune on a comb either.

This game has driven me mad over the last week. I love it. I hate it. I've snapped the CD in half. And now I'm going to jump off a bridge, because I just can't play it any more.

### A game of toy soldiers for people with spots

...Or then again, maybe not. *Warhammer* is a tabletop fantasy wargame, typically recreated using small painted figures and modelled terrain and played on wet Saturdays in Games Workshop outlets in drab shopping centres. However, it's considerably cooler than American-grown fantasy shite because instead of +2 swords of thigh-snapping it features strange goblin artillery that explodes periodically, killing all the crew. Yup, *Warhammer* has a sense of humour and it's not afraid to use it.

(Below) As you can see, it all gets a bit chaotic when battle gets under way – the 3D view just gets clogged up.



The transition to computer game is one that GW were closely involved with, just as they were with *Space Hulk*. But they haven't just recreated the tabletop game on screen, they've added a new dimension – real-time. Nor have they robbed an existing tabletop design; *Shadow Of The Horned Rat* is an all-new story, and a fine one at that.

### Shadow Of The Horned Rat

You assume the mantle of Captain Bernhardt, a feckless young mercenary making quite a name for himself in the Reikland as leader of the Grudgebringers (not to be confused with Captain Sensible, leader of the Grungebringers, wielder of the mighty axe Les Paul). You start off in the pay of the Border Princes, who are having a spot of 'bovver' with orcs and goblins (they've obviously never lived in Peckham, otherwise they'd just call Big Ern). Instead, you embark on a series of battles that get progressively bloodier (and harder). Various cut-scenes reveal an overgrown rat fond of muttering "kill kill nice nice... much pain yessss..." who is up to no good in the Empire. You are drawn inexorably into the plot,

meeting characters and influencing events as you go. There is a definite feeling of involvement, and even if you think that fantasy settings are just for knob-wits who have a complex about the size of their sword, *Warhammer* is surprisingly engrossing.

### So how do you play, then?

Take a look at the annotated screen. The main 3D view is where the action takes place. You can select units by clicking on them here or on the overhead map view; in practise though, as soon as battle commences you use the map window for all your selecting, as it gets messy in the 3D view and you end up activating the wrong unit. You can issue orders to move around, attack specific troops, wield magic items or spells and so on. Your troops all have simple AI – basically, if anything comes close they attack. All the tabletop rules for fear, hate, etc are implemented and you have to read the small print at the back of the manual if you're to get anywhere.

The campaign is controlled from your paymaster's caravan; from here you can save games, check out what missions are available, recruit new troops and get replacements while keeping an eye on your gold stash. Each mission requires you to pay your troops, so the fewer you take into battle, the better.

### Does it work, then?

Er... sort of. The early missions involve only a few units, and the enemy's rather pathetic. Although you've got a reasonable opportunity to construct a strategy and put it into action, as soon as you have more than five units under your

## Tech specs

**Memory:** 8Mb

**Processor:** 486DX/2 66 or higher

**Graphics:** SVGA

**Sound:** All Windows compatible sound cards

**Controls:** Mouse

**Note:** Windows 95, double-speed CD drive and 20Mb hard disk space required





## In perspective

**Warhammer** is a very different from **C&C**. As well as being more strategic, it's much prettier (the troops are a decent size), but it's not quite as well paced in terms of the learning curve. It's also not as well thought through as **Warcraft 2**, even though it's a far more involving game.

**Warcraft 2**

**Command & Conquer**

**Warhammer**

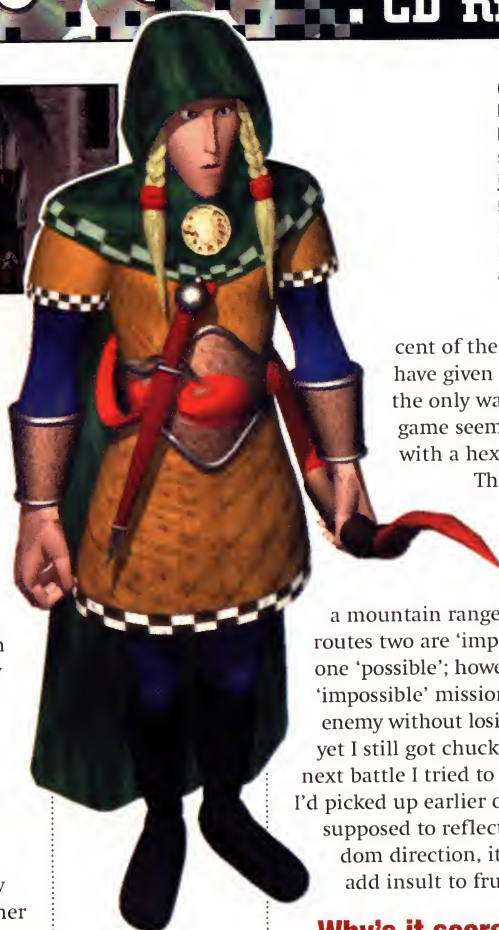
control, it gets ridiculously fiddly. All the flags on the map are overlapped, and there just isn't enough time to fart around giving meaningful orders. Once the troops are actually busy fighting, you find yourself frantically trying to boost their strength and hoping that the luck factor will give you the edge.

In the mid-game missions the enemy is numerically superior and fairly tough, so you need fate firmly on your side if you're going to win through; this means playing and replaying battles until you finally get lucky – frustrating just isn't the word for it. For example, at the end of the Border Princes campaign you have to attack the main orc camp. By now you've got artillery, and if destiny is



going your way, you can more or less rout their forces with this alone. But half the time your artillery blows up and it's almost impossible to avoid losses in hand to hand fighting, even if you win decisively. The thing is, if you do suffer fatalities, you won't make it through the next campaigns (as you realise three battles later). So you go back and start the section all over again, playing until the damn random element allows your artillery to actually survive.

This isn't strategy-stretching, it boils down to luck and perseverance. After about five days of playing the game I'd completed the first campaign several times, conserving cash and troops for the next round, only to discover it required even more bloody campaign faffing and replaying – either the playtesters were geniuses or the missions were individually playtested. Go on-line and you'll find that 90 per



(Left) This guy doesn't look very happy! Is it because of his girly skirt, or because he's just realised that to play **Warhammer** at a reasonable speed he needs to upgrade to a faster PC?

cent of the gamers out there have given up even earlier; the only way to enjoy the game seems to be to cheat with a hex editor.

There are annoying campaign twists too. At one point you have to cross

a mountain range. Of the three routes two are 'impossible', with only one 'possible'; however, in one of the 'impossible' missions I routed the enemy without losing a single soldier, yet I still got chucked out. And in the next battle I tried to use a magic item I'd picked up earlier on; though it was supposed to reflect magic in a random direction, it didn't. A bug to add insult to frustration. Bastards.

## Why's it scored 73, then?

Because it's so soooooo addictive. The concept is absolutely brilliant: a real-time strategy game that's challenging, with an interesting setting and strong plot. Once you're hooked you'll come back for more, even though it's too hard, the control system is too fiddly, and chance plays too much of a role. But the flaws are skin deep: with more cash at the start and better access to reinforcements, it would be fine. You can find hex-edited savegames on the Net and CompuServe, but if like me you don't want to 'cheat', you'll end up throwing it away after a week in disgust and disappointment. Even though I'm probably going to have another go at the weekend... see what I mean? **Z**

## Putting you in the Warhammer picture



**TOP:**  
1 3D view. Pretty but fiddly

**LEFT:**  
1 Rotates 3D view  
2 Zoom in and out  
3 Pause game

**BOTTOM:**  
1 Compass shows the direction 3D view is facing  
2 Meter shows winds of magic – too little wind, and you can't cast a spell  
3 Spell casting menu

**RIGHT:**  
1 Map window. Most of your clicking takes place here, and you can see how outnumbered you are as well. Fuck!  
2 Miscellaneous commands to hide/show units  
3 View briefing  
4 Move regiment  
5 Beat the shit out of your opponent  
6 Toggles unit's AI

**Score**

**73**

**Addictive real-time strategy... but too hard. Much, much too hard**

**Price:** £TBC **Release Date:** Out now  
**Publisher:** Mindscape **Tel:** 01444 246333

**GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."







If you're still in need of a few back issues then look no further. Each issue costs £5.95 (£7.95 outside the UK). This covers postage and packing and a small storage charge. Each back issue carries at least one cover disk crammed with games. Most of these will be playable demos or shareware and are listed below. Several back issues have the HD or CD option.

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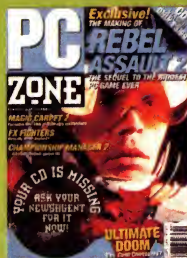
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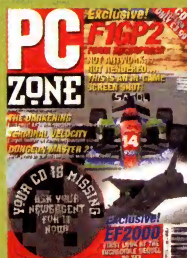
CODE: 20-96-04

## Here's a listing of the most recent issues



### August 95

- HD version (AW29A)  
Panzer General' The Complete Descent Level Editor
- CD version (AW29A/CD)  
Playable demos of Hi-Octane; Micro Machines 2; Dr Drago's Madcap Chase; Darker; Lemmings 3D and more.



### September 95

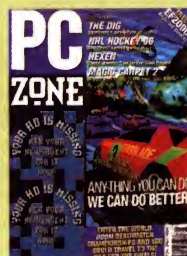
- HD version (AW30A)  
Ultimate Doom
- CD version (AW30A/CD)  
playable demos of The Duracell £50,000 Challenge; Virtual Golf; FX Fighters, Prisoner of Ice; Buried in Time; Vortex

\*\*HD version only available



### October 95

- HD version (AW31A)  
Threat; Cathuga
- CD version (AW31A/CD)  
Magic Carpet 2; Primal Rage; Prisoner of Ice; Airpower; Need for Speed; Terminal Velocity; Simtower; Picture Perfect Golf; Raven; Druid and more.



### November 95

- HD version (AW32A)  
Worms; The Machines
- CD version (AW32A/CD)  
The Dig; This Means War!; Sim Isle; MechWarrior 2; Action Soccer; Capitalism; The Machines; and the latest Ocean Software demos.

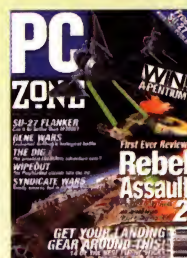
\*\*HD version only available



### December 95

- HD version (AW33A)  
Su27 Flanker; Vossnet
- CD version (AW33A/CD)  
Hexen; Wing Commander 4; Sensible World of Soccer; Stonekeep; Mortal Kombat 3; Fatal Racing; Witchaven; Alien Odyssey and more.

\*\*HD version only available



### January 96

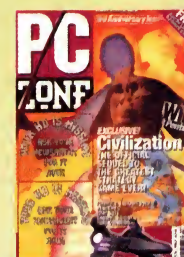
- HD version (AW34A)  
Battle Ground Ardenne
- CD version (AW34A/CD)  
NHL '96; Destruction Derby; Pro Pinball: The Web; Shell Shock; FIFA '96; IndyCar 2; Terminator: Future Shock; Trivial Pursuit; 3D Ultra Pinball and more.



### February 96

- HD version (AW35A)  
Screamer; Tempest 2000
- CD version (AW35A/CD)  
Beavis and Butt-head; Loogie Geme; Voodoo Lounge; The Hive; Radix; Extreme Pinball; Steel Panthers; Silent Hunter; Actua Soccer; Turrican 2 and more.

\*\*CD version only available



### March 96

- HD version (AW36A)  
Advanced Civilisation; Command & Conquer Editor
- CD version (AW36A/CD)  
Time Gate; Conquest of the New World; Return Fire; Normality Inc; Absolute Zero; Xenophag; Rayman; Pinball 95; Battle Isle 3; Direct X-Run-time and more

\*\*HD version only available

**PC ZONE BACK ISSUES**



# PICK N MIX



Welcome to mortuary academy. Here's our first cadaver. As you can see, the victim appears to have been force-fed a series of PC games, one by one, until his stomach split open and goo flew all over the walls. Now if you'd care to don your hygiene masks, I shall make an incision here, here, here, and hey! – how about over there – before ripping off a great big sheet of skin, plunging my hands into the innards, and pulling the games out one by one in as grisly a manner as possible. Okey-doke? Off we go...

## WWF WRESTLEMANIA: THE ARCADE GAME

**Publisher:** Acclaim  
**Tel:** 0171 344 5000  
**Price:** £TBC  
**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required; Gamepad recommended

**SCORE: 76%**

The title alone should warn you that this is *not* an after-dinner cerebral treat for the intelligensia. Previous WWF games (and there's been a whole shitload out there in the console market) have been pretty dull: this one marks the point at which the licence holders finally gave up any pretence at representing 'real' wrestling altogether, opting instead to bring us an insane, surreal orgy of cartoon violence. And blow me down if it isn't a massive improvement. Furthermore, it's a sturdy conversion of the arcade original – large smooth sprites, beefy attacks, a suitably over-the-top running commentary and, of course, about 2000 special moves. An excellent laugh in two-player mode – but not for very long. Gameplay tip: drink at least five pints of lager before getting stuck in.

(Right) *NBA Jam*: Chew my hoop!



## NBA JAM TOURNAMENT EDITION

**Publisher:** Acclaim  
**Tel:** 0171 344 5000  
**Price:** £TBC  
**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required

**SCORE: 65%**

Another sport gets the arcade makeover. This time it's basketball. Again, it's a great conversion of an arcade game – dearly loved by 13 year-old boys everywhere – that's fun for a limited period only. Despite the inclusion of all manner of ridiculous power-ups and special moves, *NBA JAM TE* is significantly less fun to play with than one of those 'office

(Below) *WWF Wrestlemania*: Readers! Insert your own puerile, sniggering caption here!

(Below right) *Stable Masters*: Stable Manager-talk about horses for courses.



basketball' hoops that sit above wastepaper baskets. Furthermore, the sheer wealth of even sillier hidden options (you can play as Bill or Hilary Clinton, for instance) leads one to suspect that the programmers had rather too much time on their hands, once the sprite control and 'running from one side to the other' gameplay had been sorted out.

## STABLE MASTERS

**Publisher:** ESP Software  
**Tel:** 01702-434600  
**Price:** £TBC  
**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required

**SCORE: 50%**

Hold on to your hats, folks – it's a horse training management game. And it's gone totally and utterly over my head. Try as I might, no amount of squinting at the manual or clicking at the (spectacularly untidy) on-screen menus could lead me toward anything even *approaching* a vague clue as to what the hell was going on. Reams and reams of statistics are there if you want them – and there *are* animated races – but this is strictly for people who *really really love* the idea of training horses. And who know a thing or two about how the whole process works. And have absolutely no social life whatsoever. If you don't fit into any of those categories, you're not going to buy it anyway – and if you *do*, then you may well consider it your very own personal equivalent of *Championship Manager 2*, *Premier Manager*, *Grand Prix Manager* or any other of those spreadsheet-cum-game things that footy fans seem to spooze over. At least I tried... c'mon – give a guy some credit, will you?







### EXPECT NO MERCY

**Publisher:** Microforum  
**Tel:** 00 1 416 656 6406  
**Price:** £TBC  
**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required; Windows 3.1/95 required

**SCORE: 13%**

Ha ha ha. Now here's an example of a game that's practically pulling down its trousers and meekly begging me to kick its arse black and blue. It's the most breathtakingly inept beat 'em up I've ever seen. Normally something this tragic inspires humanitarian treatment – I end up feeling sorry for the production team, who have no doubt spent months and months working on it, only to have me slag it off in a hundred words or less. But look at that title! If they truly 'expect no mercy', they won't mind me saying that every single person involved with the making of this worthless bucket of pus should be marched outside on a cold, cold winter's morning, then shot in the face at point blank range. With a dum-dum bullet. Seventeen times.

### EARTHWORM JIM

**Publisher:** Activision  
**Tel:** 0181 742 9400  
**Price:** £TBC  
**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required; Windows 95 required

**SCORE: 70%**

Thundering onto your PC a mere two years too late, it's everybody's favourite invertebrate, *Earthworm Jim*! Top-hole platform game action! Wonderful cartoon animation! Oodles of 'zany' off-the-wall humour! Hoorah! Or maybe not. This Windows 95 version is a very accurate conversion indeed, and the game itself is great (if a little outdated) – but consider this: the DOS version of *Earthworm Jim 2* is due out very soon from FunSoft (check out the demo on this month's cover CD), and it includes *Earthworm Jim 1* in the package, absolutely free. Which seems to render this release somewhat redundant. The score reflects the game itself – not the 'value' of this particular package. You have been warned.



(Above) *SFPD Homicide: The Body in the Bay*: Ergh, look Captain. The victim soiled his pants. Perhaps his tailor did it?

(Left) *Expect No Mercy*: It's unplayability-tastic!

### SFPD HOMICIDE: THE BODY IN THE BAY

**Publisher:** 3 Prong Plug/Grolier Electronic Publishing  
**Tel:** 00 1 203 797 3530  
**Price:** £24.99  
**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required

**SCORE: 83%**

The first in a projected series of "True Crime" games. This is actually damn good fun. A stiff's just been fished out of the river and it's up to you to find out who he is, who killed him, and why – and you've got to make it all stand up in court. What follows is an authentic recreation of a homicide investigation as you gather physical evidence, quiz witnesses and suspects, and generally mull it all over in your little cop's mind. Further entertainment value can be derived from the hilariously hammy, yet somehow endearing performances of the actors – and the guy who actually solved the case in real life who pops up to dole out advice every now and again. Frighteningly absorbing – and highly recommended for any would-be Colombos out there.

### PINBALL 95

**Publisher:** Maxis  
**Tel:** 0171-490 2333  
**Price:** £TBC  
**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required; Windows 95 required

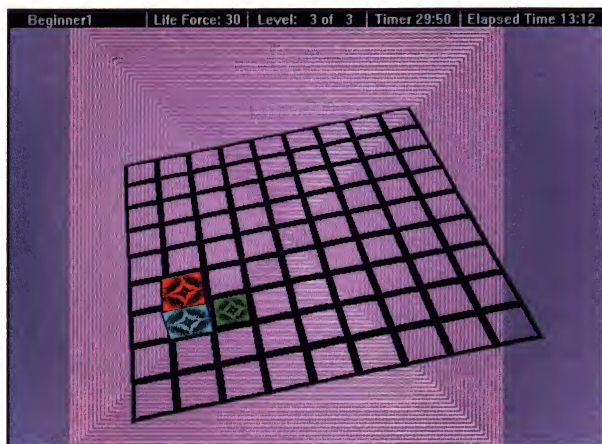
**SCORE: 10%**

(Left) *Earthworm Jim*: Zoink. Clong. Biff. Blam. Zip. Ping. Etc.

(Below) *Pinball 95*: The twin brother of every other crappy pinball game ever.







(Above) *Endorfun*: Just say no, kids.

(Far right) *Terror TRAX*: it's nowhere near as bad as you might think.

scrolling, detailed tables here, just three boring, uninspiring '3D' rendered ones, which only take up half the screen. Microsoft Excel has more gameplay value. Why is this happening? Who hit the 'diarrhoea' button on the giant 'Pinball Simulation Arse' in the sky? I'm telling you now, if I see another substandard pinball game heading my way next month, there's going to be blood up the walls. Possibly my own. Now take this waste of time, space and packaging away and bury it somewhere, will you?

## TERROR TRAX: THE VAMPIRE

**Publisher:** 3 Prong Plug/Grolier Electronic Publishing

**Tel:** 00 1 203 797 3530

**Price:** £24.99

**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required; Windows 3.1/95 required

**SCORE: 75%**

Now this is a bit more interesting. It's a full-on interactive movie – but before you run away screaming, let me explain why I found myself warming to its charms. Basically, this is a kind of 'X-Files Interactive', in which you give orders to a team of paranormal investigators – cum-arsekickers, answering weird and scary '911' emergency calls. You view the action from a camera mounted in their special HUD sunglasses as they search through crime scenes, get into car chases, and find themselves under attack from all manner of undead nasties. Pure disposable popcorn; you probably won't play it very often, but it is different, it is good fun, and while it lasts the action never lets up. Scooby Doo for the '90s.

## SHIVERS

**Publisher:** Sierra

**Tel:** 01734 303322

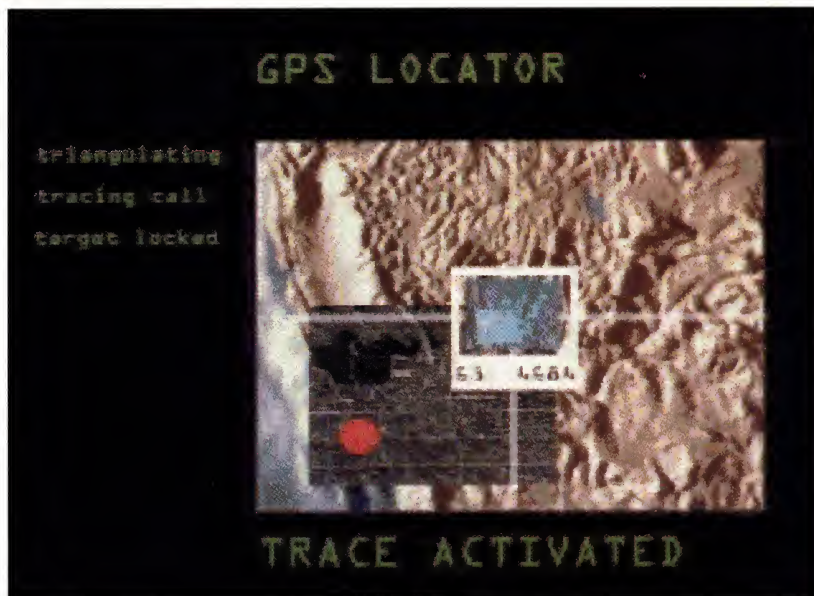
**Price:** £TBC

**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required; Windows 3.1/95 required

**SCORE: 48%**

Half-arsed *Myst* rip-off that's dreary to begin with and then manages to travel rapidly downhill. I don't know about you, but I'm sick to the back teeth with slow-paced, rendered-to-pieces, 'enigmatic' point-and-clickers such as this. It's supposed to be scary

(Right) *Shivers*: Frightened? You won't be...



and unsettling. It isn't. If I wanted to meander aimlessly through a bland unprovoking landscape, with little or no concern over just what I was supposed to be doing there, I'd neck a load of Prozac and go and live in Belgium. Do you remember T'Pau, the bland MOR soft-rock band who had a string of hits (well, okay, two hits) during the mid-'80s? Well, this is the video game equivalent of listening to one of their albums. Again and again and again.

## ENDORFUN

**Publisher:** Time Warner Interactive

**Tel:** 0171 391 4300

**Price:** £TBC

**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required; Windows 3.1/95 required

**SCORE: 67%**

This is the game that caused a stink in the tabloids a while ago, thanks to the inclusion of 'subliminal' messages in its soundtrack and background graphics. The messages – empty-headed psychobabble such as "I am beautiful"

and "I am at ease with my own thoughts and feelings" – are supposed to soothe you as you play. What bollocks. The game itself is a so-so puzzle affair in which you move a 3D cube about and absorb energy (don't ask why). You don't *complete* levels in this, you 'transcend' them. Presumably the makers are aiming at the 'funny cigarette' brigade (ie over 33 per cent of the population) – but let's be honest here, they'd have more success with a game that simulated trips to the all-night garage at 3am, hours and hours spent watching the TV with the sound turned down, and interminable bouts of frenzied snack-eating.

## LODE RUNNER

**Publisher:** Sierra

**Tel:** 01734 303322

**Price:** £TBC

**Note:** Double-speed CD drive required; Windows 95 required

**SCORE: 20%**

Well, what can I say? *Lode Runner* – the game that nobody *ever* mentions in their lists of the







(Left) *Lode Runner*: it's back. Oh Jesus Christ, it's back.

ten thousand greatest games of all time – is back. And it's just as dull. Teeny weeny sprites. Boring-woring gameplay. But wait, what's this? This is *Lode Runner* On-Line! You can link up and play it over a modem! Now there's a thing. Sadly, very few mental patients have access to that kind of equipment. I have plenty of respect for old-school retro games; just for the record, I'd like to see a '90s update of *Skool Daze* (the ZX Spectrum 'naughty boy' simulator), and you can't beat the simplicity of something like *Pong* or *Defender* – but this really is *putrefying corpse* of a game. Just drop it, Sierra. Please?

adventure stakes, it has you controlling the eponymous dog and rabbit detective team through a series of adventures based on the underground comics of the same name. In your quest to find a disappearing Bigfoot who's kidnapped Trixie the Giraffe-Necked Girl, you'll puzzle your way through circus freak-shows and some of the tackiest tourist traps America has to offer. You'll laugh aloud at the snappy '50s B-movie style dialogue and you'll laugh even louder when you realise you've got a game this good for just 13 measly quid. And since it's the full talkie CD version, people around you will laugh, too. This will reflect well on you. You'll have more friends. You'll be popular. What an investment.

## Budget Games

(cut here for free badge!)

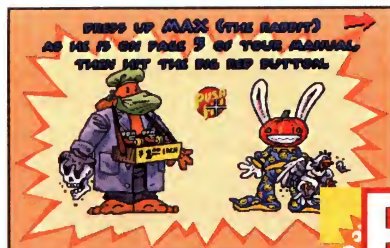
Do you keep the unused water from a boiled kettle in a thermos flask to make huge savings on electricity? Do you scour the pages of your local paper for under-a-fiver bargains you don't need? Then you're a Squeak. And these pages are for you.

### SAM AND MAX HIT THE ROAD

Publisher: US Gold  
Tel: 0121 625 3388  
Price: £12.99

**SCORE: 93%**

It seems like only yesterday we were sitting around the office, chewing the fat in our underwear (we like to keep fat in our underwear, especially during a cold snap) and laughing along to *Sam and Max*. Still the all-time high point in the point-and-click



(Left & Below) *Sam and Max Hit The Road*: Max demonstrates his caring, holistic approach to problem solving.



### INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS

Publisher: US Gold  
Tel: 0121 625 3388  
Price: £12.99

**SCORE: 90%**

As if the release of *Sam and Max* isn't enough for point-and-click aficionados, this high-quality *Indiana Jones* adventure – from the

## Barg-o-rama

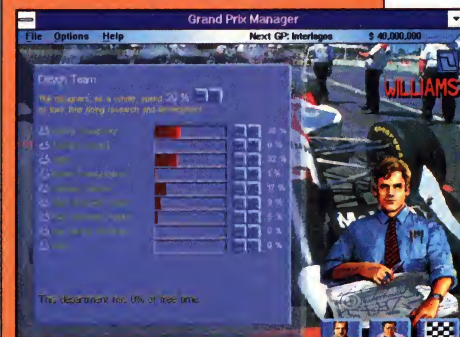
The true squeak, on perusing budget pages for bargain-priced entertainment, will be plunged into fretfulness, worried that they may have missed a poundstretching bargain at some point in the past. Look on this section as a historical reminder for the squeaky worrywart, as it contains only absolute, five-star essential buys, the purchase of any of which will guarantee top quality gaming and – more importantly – may even stop someone else having it.

**Essential Collections: Business £34.99**  
*Transport Tycoon* is *Sim City 2000* for the transport industry, and *Theme Park* lets you make children sick. What more could you want?

**Essential Collections: Flight £34.99**  
*192 Pacific Air War*, *Fleet Defender F14* and *Wings Of Glory* – three decent flight sims for the price of a pint. (If you apply the same pricing formula the police use when they recover drugs, that is.)

**Essential Collections: Sport £34.99**  
*PGA Tour 486* is a superb golf game. *F1 Grand Prix* is the original version of the outstanding racing game. And *FIFA Soccer* is okay, too.

**Formula 1 Grand Prix £14.99**  
If you want the classic F1 racing game, but don't want the other stuff in the Sport Collection edition, get it this way. You know it makes sense.



**Indycar Racing £9.99**  
Definitive, great-looking, oval-track racing sim, with almost everything the follow-up has – only it's under a tenner.

**Power, Corruption and Lies £34.99**  
A good compilation. Worth it for *UFO* and *Dune 2* alone, but also includes *Fleet Defender F14* and *Beneath A Steel Sky*. VFM, squeaks.



## PC ZONE CLASSIC

### Barg-o-rama

#### Privateer £11.99

Wing Commander type, space-based dogfighting, with *Elite*-style trading sections. Complete with extra bits and speech packs.

#### Space Hulk £11.99

Gripping strategic gameplay requiring a great tactical mind, a cool head, the reflexes of a humming-bird on adrenachrone and rubber underwear.



#### Strike Commander £11.99

Refreshingly straightforward, arcade-style flight sim with decent graphics and loads of longevity, thanks to the inclusion of all the extra missions.

#### Syndicate Plus £11.99

All the original missions, plus the add-ons, on one CD. Extremely addictive strategic shoot 'em up that gets bloody hard later on.

#### System Shock £11.99

*Ultima Underworld* in space: big, first-person viewed adventure, with total freedom of movement, loads of weapons and hours of fun/fear.

#### Wing Commander II £11.99

Not as good as *WCIII* and *WCIV*, but then it runs on normal PCs and doesn't need 5GB RAM. Includes the extra missions and speech packs.



#### World Of Combat £29.99

Outstanding compilation: top chopper sim *Comanche*; *Armored Fist*, it's tank game equivalent; and submarine fest, *Wolfpack*.



(Above) *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*: Sophia, the flame-haired temptress with the heart of gold, shows why women love lycra.

people who brought you *Monkey Island* – gets the budget treatment in the same month. And again, it's the talkie version, which means Indy sounds like Harrison Ford, the thinking woman's Joe Royle. There are three ways to play the thing, depending on how hard you want to think, whether you like to break up the thinking with an occasional bout of fisticuffs (or footicuffs), and whether you want a bit of help via the interjections of your flame-haired, and decidedly lippy, female sidekick Sophia. Since each approach takes a different route through the game, you can play through it three times if you want to and get even more value for money. Which is, let's face it, squeak heaven.

### TWENTY WARGAME CLASSICS

Publisher: Mindscape

Tel: 01444 246333

Price: £TBA



### SCORE: 80%

Wargames based on every scenario from feudal Japan, the American Civil War and the Western and Eastern Fronts in WW2, to fantasy/sword and sorcery epics and interstellar conflict. Award-winning titles include *Panzer General*, *Clash Of Steel* and *Carrier Strike*. If you're the kind of chap who likes to lounge about in those lovely army jumpers with the patches on the shoulders, while thumbing through back copies of *Lead Soldier Monthly* and polishing your helmet, this is the collection for you.

### PERFECT SPORT

Publisher: Accolade

Tel: 0171 391 4300

Price: £TBC

### SCORE: 40%

Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition is a pretty dated-

looking golf game, but it has an easy-to-use course designer which is a laugh, and eventually becomes more interesting than the game itself. It's packaged with *On The Ball World Cup Edition*, a less than inspiring football management game based around the last World Cup. And who'd be an international manager these days?

### JOURNEYMAN PROJECT TURBO

Publisher: US Gold

Tel: 0121 625 3388

Price: £9.99

### SCORE: 70%

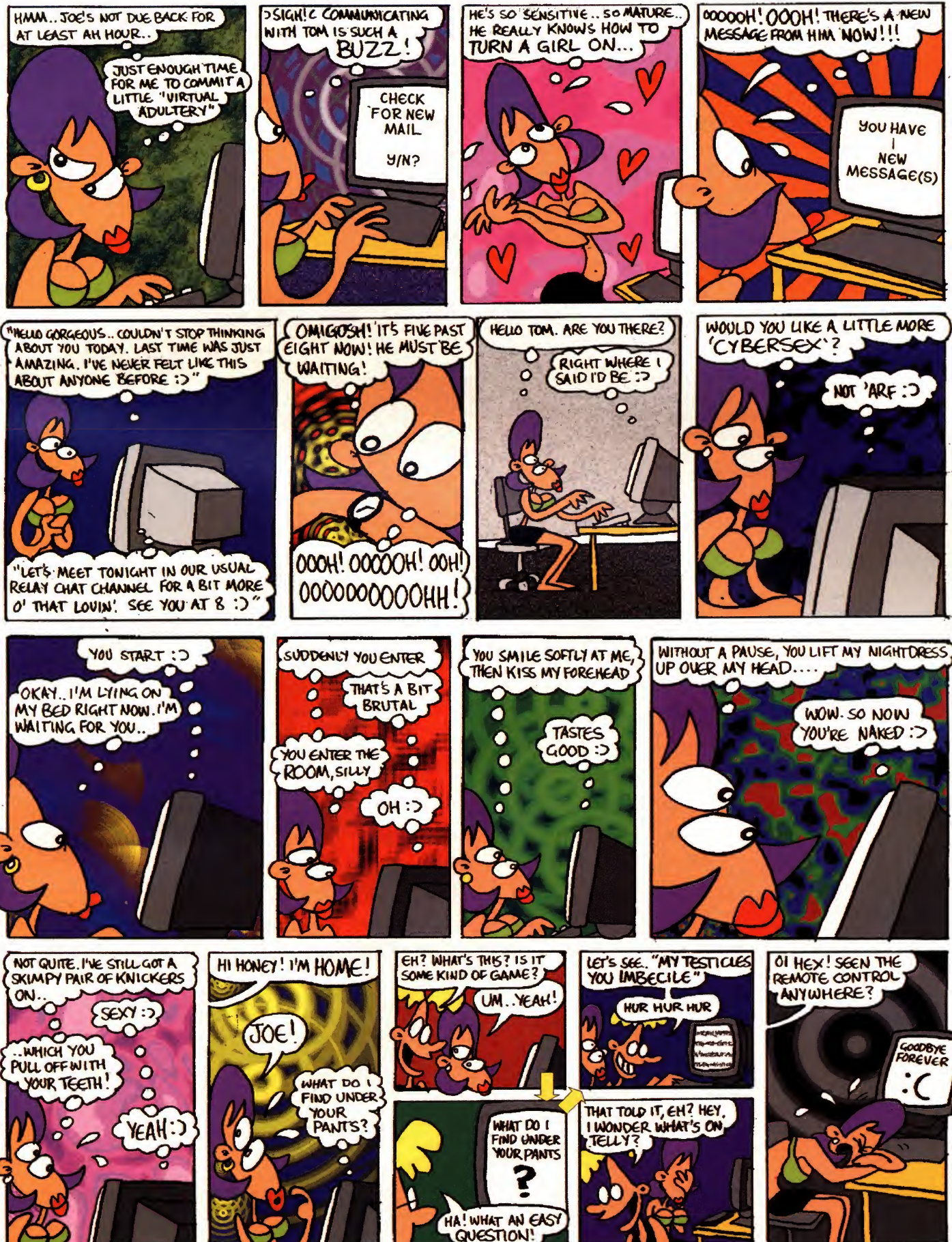
*The Journeyman Project* went down very well on the Mac (although any game that works goes down well on the Mac) but was only moderately received on the PC. Nevertheless, it's a fairly good adventure game based around time travel and the accumulation of more and more impressive equipment to help you in your tasks. It looks good, but even this speeded-up version is quite slow unless you have 16MB RAM. Pretty good for a tenner, though. Z





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# ON-LINE

## COOL FILES

**Dark Forces, Dark Forces – everything is Dark Forces. Apparently. Over to The Ponce.**

**I**T'S ALL HAPPENING NOW. FOR SOME REASON, THERE'S BEEN A sudden resurgence of interest in *Dark Forces*. As people have got to grips with *DFUSE*, the complex *DF* level editor, and to terms with the absence of network gameplay, the whole game has opened up and brought many a repressed *Star Wars* fantasy blossoming forth. Everywhere is packed with new levels, new monsters, and even new weapons. Check these out:

### \ONLINE\DF

First is a small but kitsch patch which allows you to wield – as we all really want to – a green (good) lightsaber within the game (*GRSABER.ZIP*, 10212), and the hilarious *BOBA.ZIP* (343321 bytes) which turns you into Boba Fett, complete with wrist blaster, helmet, cannon, and flamethrower. Cool. Also around this month are a suite of helpful level designing tools, most noticeable of which is *WAD2DF.ZIP* (11305 bytes) which converts *Doom* *WAD* files into *Dark Forces* *GOB* files. Please note, however, that it only converts the geometry of a level, not the objects – but it remains highly useful nonetheless. Used in tandem with that is *FrameMaker* (*FRAMEMAK.ZIP* 73394) a Windows-based conversion utility which will convert *BMP* graphic files into *Dark Forces*' own native format, essentially allowing you to create your very own monsters. You'll find a demo, tutorials, reviews, and new levels using all this kit in *E-ZINE1.ZIP* (122351 bytes), a *Dark Forces* Electronic Mag.



All this wondrous stuff can be found on this month's cover disk in \ONLINE\DF, plus a few bonus extra levels (*HOERBY.ZIP*, *BESPIN.ZIP* and *SHOCKW.ZIP*) for you to test your brand new lightsaber on. Enjoy!

### \ONLINE\COOL

So far 1996 has also seen the release of the latest versions of many a popular *Doom* and *Descent* level editor. *DEVIL20.ZIP* (317045) is a public beta release of the well-respected *Descent* editor (but not *Descent 2*, though). Although it works it's still buggy, so use it at your own risk.

In the *Doom* world, there are three main top-level designers – *DEEP*, *WadAuthor*, and *DETH* – all of which are now in new enhanced version format. *DEEP 8.2* (*DEEP.ZIP* 978915 bytes) works for the great triumvirate (*Doom*, *Hexen*, *Heretic*) and now supports handwriting on walls (!), *Hexen* scripts, full cut/paste functions, and texture browsing. *WadAuthor* (*WAUTHOR.ZIP* 1546271 bytes) is editor, graphics browser, and *BSP* in one package, and even allows you to run the game from the editor (memory permitting, of course). And finally the new version of *DETH* (*DETH.ZIP* 704691) includes drop-to-DOS mode, gamma correction, scaled textures, fast *BMPs*, and multiple *UNDOS*. Again you'll find all these in the \ONLINE\COOL directory on this month's glorious cover CD.

## DOOM WATCH

**A**h, *Doomsters*. Welcome to another exciting edition of *DoomWatch*. Intricately fascinating to those who live in the 'Doom community', stultifyingly boring to those outside, *DoomWatch* is for those of you who dream in 16-colour *ANSI* graphics and fight with British Telecom. This month, we unveil some new trends in the on-line gaming world, congratulate those who won our *Wireplay* compo, gratuitously applaud the *UberFragMeister Doom Cup*, and welcome two new North England servers to the network.

### PICTURE OPPORTUNITY

**E**arlier this year, the *UberFragMeister* was extremely proud to finally receive his prize for winning the *CIX Doom Knockout League*. The prize was a trophy made of gold

(coloured metal), inset with diamond (like nodules), and with a plinth of purest marble (painted rock). Presented by Brian Williams, manager of *CIX* at their Tolworth headquarters, the *Doom* cup now rests pride of place next to the *UberFrag*'s bed, fulfilling the dual purpose of ornate ashtray and something-very-hard-to-hide-when-girls-come-round. The *UberFrag* will have to surrender the cup to this year's winner or, if he wins it again, print another picture of it with lots of back-slapping and stick-beating. You have been warned.

### PRIZES, PRIZES, PRIZES

**L**ottery fever (of a sort) has struck the *Doom* world. If you had been waiting for an excuse to shell out on a modem, now's the time. A couple of *Doom* BBS's are now offering cash prizes



for the winners of their monthly *Doom* tournaments. Okay, so the cash value isn't Lottery-esque but nevertheless the chance of winning £50 (translation: 25 pints at West End bar prices) through pure *Doom*-skills alone is not one to be sniffed at, not to mention the cash's ability to shave £££s of your phone bill. Multiplay are the first – their £50 prize money is split between the top three placed players in a knockout tournament. It all happens very swiftly; games are drawn randomly, played off line, and recorded. Only subscribing members are allowed to play (which is fair enough) and the compos are scheduled monthly by Candyman (contact him on-line). Mayhem BBS in Scotland are also planning a major league tournament with a mammoth £250 cash prize to split unevenly between the top four placed players. Get in there soon, *Doom* hustlers. This may be the shape of things to come.

**Multiplay BBS: 0181-900 1266**

## WIREPLAY ANNOUNCE PRICES

After being a tad cagey for a small period of time, BT's new gaming system Wireplay, due to be launched this summer, has finally announced its pricing scheme. Off-peak games (that's after 6pm weekdays, and all day and night weekends) will cost £1.50 an hour, on-peak games will cost... (thunderous drum roll, the sound of Satan manoeuvring his bowels into range)... a staggering £5.80 an hour. Eeek. For those suicidal enough to play during the hours of daylight, this is quite an incredible price. Stay tuned for more details as they arrive.

**Wireplay Information Line: 0800 800892**



(Left) Get ready... now you know how much it will cost you to play *Doom* using BT's Wireplay service.

## DOOM NORTH

For all those farmers, coal miners, and people who talk like Brian Glover beyond the M25, there is now hope. Two new game servers have popped up recently in the North of England, providing local access for those who up to now had to pay long distance call rates and put up with jokes from Southern Shandy drinking 'poofs'. The Forest II is based in Manchester and is a throbbing mecca for all middle-England Doomsters, providing the usual services (on-line chat, four-player *Doom*, *Descent*, and file libraries) for a mere 50p an hour (or 50 ha'penny thrupence or whatever currency is used up there). The 25 lines are often packed with improbable sounding players (like NightCrawler, Rabel, Burger and Clone) and the atmos is friendly and deadly.

Slightly more north, in fact over the border in Scotland, is Mayhem BBS, a smaller, lower key server which provides for a healthy contingent of Caledonian Doomsters, a local call away from Glasgow (and Edinburgh too, apparently). Prices are good (average 50p an hour) and the games are smooth.

No doubt our Northern chums will be 'whipping' each other very soon (ho-ho). Don't be 'bitter' lads (hee-hee). Add your own cloth cap/ee-by-gum-chuck/scouser 'Brookie-alright

Teh' joke in here (har-har). Still no servers in Liverpool or Yorkshire as yet, but since very few homes out there have electricity and USR's clockwork modem is still in R&D purgatory, it's not surprising.

**Forest II: 0161-950 9600**

**Mayhem: 01698 888080**

## DOOM BETA

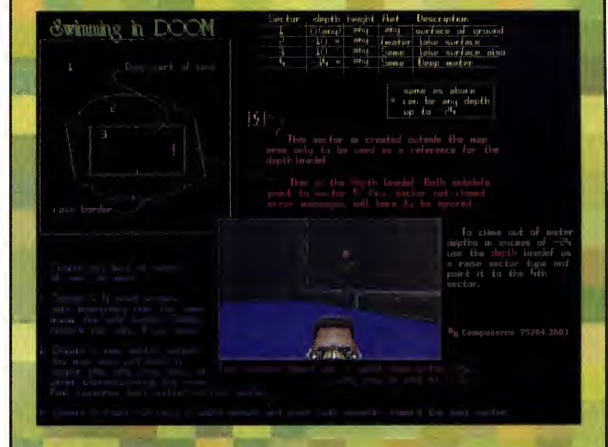
Just as a slight aside, DoomWatch has come into possession of a very early version of *Doom* – the three-level beta version in fact, which was sent out to magazines way back in October 1993. What's interesting about this version is the 'old BFG', obviously the weapon of choice before the current weird 'n' wacky BFG was implemented. In the beta, the BFG fires a churning tidal wave of plasma down corridors, murdering anything in its path.

Okay okay, so you're probably thinking that it's not really that amazing, but it is interesting. (Are you sure? – Ed.)



## Sad sad sad

Just a quick visual indication of how sad some people can get about *Doom*. Downloaded from CompuServe is this breathless GIF, in which the author excitedly tells how to allow *Heretic*-style swimming in your own levels. The disturbing aspect is not the intricacy of the method nor the evangelical style of its telling but that this guy truly believes that he has contributed to the progress of mankind by finding a way of 'swimming in *Doom*'.



## Send send send

If you've played an excellent WAD, found a utility or patch, nicked something good from an anonymous FTP site, or found a particularly depraved corner of the Web, then drop us a line, either by standard mail:

**PC ZONE ON-LINE, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ**  
or Internet e-mail at: **PCZONE@CIX.compulink.co.uk**  
or CompuServe e-mail at: **100142,2152**

Please, please, please do not e-mail any unsolicited unencoded or binary mail to either address. Send a cover note first, explaining what you have, and we will arrange something.





## Update Watch

Here we are again with another tri-monthly round-up of bug fixes, patches, upgrades, and new drivers that we, the British gameplaying public, never get told about. You'll find all these patches on this month's cover disc in the ONLINE\PATCHES directory. Please ensure that you carefully read all the documentation included with each file and make back-ups where necessary (although these are official patches so you shouldn't need to). *PC Zone* will not be held responsible for any damage caused using these utilities.

| Game                  | Company     | Filename     | Size   | Notes  |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|--------|--|
| Comanche              | Sublogic    | COM201.EXE   | 525263 | Corrects modem compatibility issues                                      |
| Command & Conquer     | Virgin      | CC119P.EXE   | 634028 | Upgrade 1.07 to 1.18p  |
| Civnet                | MicroProse  | CIVNETV1.ZIP | 980331 | Upgrade from v1.0  |
| First Encounters      | Gametek     | 106ENGCD.ZIP | 777756 | 1.06 patch for Elite II CD version                                       |
| Hexen                 | iD Software | VFX1HERE.EXE | 38031  | Driver for Forte VFX-1 headset   |
| Magic Carpet II       | Bullfrog    | VFX1NETH.EXE | 33494  | Driver for Forte VFX-1 headset   |
| Need For Speed        | EA          | NFS.ZIP      | 461541 | Corrects 'CD-ROM seek error'   |
| Stonekeep             | Interplay   | SK_P12.ZIP   | 559135 | Upgrade to 1.2   |
| TIE Fighter CD        | LucasArts   | TIECDJOY.ZIP | 494181 | Updates joystick support for sticks like the Microsoft SideWinder 3D Pro |
| Unnecessary Roughness | Accolade    | UR96PATC.ZIP | 588947 | Fixes sound and video bugs   |
| Werewolf              | Sublogic    | WER101.EXE   | 499635 | Corrects modem compatibility issues                                      |

# DEATHMATCH

Roll up! Roll up! Come ye gather unto *Hexen* and experience a new deathmatch er, experience.

Shooting you opponent's brain through the back of their head? Old hat. Carving your chum's face into small Mr Men shaped pieces with a chainsaw? Pah. Slapping your best friend's pancreatic remains across your mother's steaming offal splattered body with a BFG? Too boring. Two rockets having a sword fight in your mouth? Sorry, seen it before. Yes, these and the other deathmatch moments we all treasure are now out of fashion. In is macing your opponent's nose into a bloody bruise, electrocuting your gaylord wizardly team mate, freezing, punching, chopping, burning, or letting your pet minotaur do the job.

Well, okay, *Doom* deathmatch isn't really on the way out, and probably never will be. But you should be aware that *Hexen* now offers a nouvelle alternative to relentless shotgun stuff. *Hexen* deathmatch isn't as frantic or as frag-packed as *Doom*'s, but offers a chance of cerebral activity as well as gut-based reflex action and considered inventory management.

### DEATHMATCH PLAY

Like its big brother, level objects are completely re-arranged for deathmatch play. Each level contains all the character class's weapons as well as the scattered parts of the mega



weapons and a liberal littering of power-ups and magic objects. Players, again, start in random locations but with one new option – random classes. When you kick the bucket, you can choose – with a command line parameter – to reincarnate randomly as a mage, cleric or fighter. This adds some much needed variety to head-to-head games, an element of surprise, and extensive level knowledge. Bar this and the weapons themselves, *Hexen* death duels run along the same lines as *Doom* (running, dying, shooting, dying – ad lib to the sounds of your social life, dying).

### CO-OPERATIVE PLAY

There is, however, one more new tilt to the network play. *Hexen* may be the first game to legitimise co-operative network play – but it had better be careful. Co-op mode is akin to a frowned-upon sexual activity in Doomg circles. Mention you enjoy co-op, and people will titter. Treat you suspiciously. Make jokes. Spread rumours. Your neighbours will look at you strangely. A character based on you will appear in the soap operas. The Federation Of Cub Scout Leaders newsletter will start appearing on your door mat.

NEWBIE 1: Do you wanna play co-op?  
 EXPERT: No.  
 NEWBIE 2: Fancy some co-op?  
 EXPERT: No.  
 NEWBIE 3: Co-operative?  
 EXPERT: No.  
 NEWBIE 4: Let's work together on this level.  
 EXPERT: No.

Two great hulking marines, oiled head to foot in sweat, brandishing their not-that-unphallic weaponry around a fraught, danger-laden landscape – working together? Four full-bodied death machines backing each other up? They might as well be sleeping together, gambolling hand in



## Game servers

| Name          | Number        | Location   | Lines | Price   | Member | Ladder | Internet | C/C | Comments               |
|---------------|---------------|------------|-------|---------|--------|--------|----------|-----|------------------------|
| The Forest    | 01425-629629  | Hampshire  | 12    | 50-90p  | 1400+  | N      | Y        | N   | Friendly, lots of chat |
| The Forest II | 0161-950-9600 | Manchester | 25    | 50p     | 1400   | N      | N        | N   | Local to Birmingham    |
| Gamesnet      | 01222-362361  | Cardiff    | 12    | £120-70 | 600    | N      | N        | Y   | Pretty quiet           |
| Gamesnet      | 0171-40-0515  | London     | 20    | £120-70 | 2200   | Y      | Y        | Y   | Biggest and busiest    |
| Multiplay     | 0181-900-1266 | London     | 12    | 25p     |        | Y      | N        | N   | Very smooth games      |
| The Games BBS | 0181-561-3242 | London     | 12    | 50p     |        | N      | Y        | Y   | Very large file area   |
| Mayhem        | 01698-888080  | Scotland   | 6     | 50p     | 100    | N      | N        | N   | Quite new              |

hand through Hell, with daisies, good-luck presents, and half a tub of vaseline. In DeathMatch, the only currency is death. Your only friend is your shotgun. And the only person you're looking out for is Mr You, of Me Street, SelfCity. Friendship, tactics, ambushes, covering, suppressing fire – all for wusses. You shoot, you get shot, and then you get up and do some more shooting.

But, in *Hexen*, co-op is more in tune with the RPG ethos. It's actually quite a fun prospect to go up against *Hex*'s monster menagerie and deathtraps with a band of multi-talented adventurers. In four-player mode, two of your chums could be fighters, massing up front to blat the first assault, while a cleric and a mage can provide additional 'air support' and rear-guard cover with their ranged weapons. You can almost hear the arguments:



(Above) If you're bored (surely not?) of playing *Doom* deathmatch, have a go at *Hexen*!

MAGE: Stand back, I'm going to use Bloodscourge!  
 FIGHTER 1: No! No! We're in the way! Use the Minotaur.  
 CLERIC: Hee-hee. Look, I'm flying.  
 FIGHTER 2: Desist! Use not the Minotaur within. We will all be slain.  
 CLERIC: Why are you talking in poncey RPG language?  
 FIGHTER 2: (Huffily) Just trying to get into it.  
 FIGHTER 1: Lay down some suppressing fire with the incinerators.  
 MAGE: You're in the wrong game. I say it's Bloodscourge or nothing.  
 CLERIC: Weeeeeehhhh. Wahay!  
 FIGHTER 1: Forsooth, can we decide?  
 CLERIC: I know, I'll use my flechettes...  
 MAGE: No!  
 FIGHTER 2: No! Arrrrgrhhhh!  
 CLERIC: Urrrghhhh.

They all gasp their last and perish as the cleric's flechettes explode into poisonous gas clouds.

### HMMMM

Well, the jury's still out on *Hexen* deathmatch. Will it gain world cult status as the best way to virtually serial kill people, or will it splutter and fizzle out like *Heretic*'s messy variation? Only time will tell. Already there are mutterings of discontent on the Internet as various US games BBS's ban the cleric character from the proceedings, due to the totally awesome and overwhelming fire-and-forget power of the Justifier. And this reviewer, not unknown for his prowess in the deathmatch arena, found *Hexen*'s wealth of key controls a little too 'scattered' for split second use. Watch this space... **Z**

## Why play Wireplay?

All entries to the Wireplay competition have been passed on to BT, who should be contacting the winners soon.

## Join CIX for free

Yes, yes and thrice yes, our no-holes-barred (except the obvious one) membership deal with on-line service and Internet providers CIX goes on and on. So far, over 200 aspirant surfers have taken up the offer and joined CIX without having to fork out that cumbersome £25 registration fee.

For the uninitiated, CIX is like a huge sprawling BBS with over 15,000 members and 9,000 conferences on subjects covering all manner of game and lifestyle subjects – *Doom*, *Descent*, *Hexen*, *FIFA 96* etc etc, plus major conferences from top software developers Team 17, DID, Digital Integration, Bullfrog, and Electronic Arts. And, of course, the hulking sweaty rave that is the *PC Zone* conference, where you can chat about magazine related issues, slag the writers off, talk to Mr Cursor, and dare to challenge the UberFragMeister himself to a game of *Doom*. There are also well-organised ladders and leagues for a variety of games. You can also access, effortlessly and for free, all 16,328 Internet Usenet groups and download dodgy pictures (if that is your wont). There really is nothing else you could ask for.

Normally when you join CIX you have to pay a £25 registration fee and go through the rigmarole of obtaining the shareware version of Ameol. Not so, we say. CIX have generously waived the £25 fee for joining and we've stuffed Ameol (both 16-bit and 32-bit Windows 95 ready versions) on this month's cover CD. Fab McFab. So, you're ready to flush your Internet connection down the toilet, and get sussed with the excellent, all-British CIX carnival of comms.

And there's no laborious phoning or waiting 28 days rubbish. You can log on NOW. Here's how:

**1** Install Ameol from the ONLINE directory of the CD-ROM onto your computer. NB: If you're running Windows 95, install in the faster, sleeker Ameol32 (if you're still stuck in Windows 3.1, you're probably better off with Ameol16).

**2** Using standard COMMS software set to 8-N-1, dial the CIX number (0181-296 1255). At the log-in prompt, type <CIX>. Then type <new>. This will create a new account.

**3** After supplying your name and credit card details, you'll be asked if you have a special registration code. Type <YES>, then enter <PCZONE> as your code, with no spaces.

**4** That's it!

CIX on-line charges are ultra-cheap for two reasons. Firstly, it's only 4p per minute off-peak, 6.5 p on-peak, plus the price of the phone call. And secondly, because you're using an OLR your connect times are ultra-minimal (*PC Zone*'s average daily connect time is 50 seconds!) and even less if you use a 28800 connection. The minimum charge per month is £6.25 (ie you pay that even if you don't spend that much in connection charges), but most users rarely go over that.

(If you need any more information then you can call the CIX helpline on 0181-296 9666 during office hours.)



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- Radiohead - unplugged and grumpy.
- The battle of the bands - PM Dawn and KRS1 hip hop homeboys, head to head.
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Pythonesque madness with Terry Gilliam.
- For more info: check out our website [www.blender.com](http://www.blender.com)

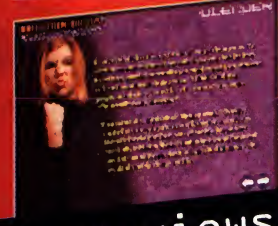
**SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:**  
**Windows**  
MCP2 strongly recommended  
Windows 3.1 (or later) with DOS 6.2 (or later)  
486 or Pentium PC required  
4 Megabytes FREE RAM (6 recommended)  
Sound Card (Most modules)  
13" VGA or SVGA monitor  
Quicktime 2.02 for Windows (supplied)  
CD-ROM drive (double speed or better recommended)  
**Macintosh**  
Macintosh System 7  
68030 processor required  
60040 or better strongly recommended  
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# BLENDER



It all adds up to 6 hours of engrossing entertainment





Birds do it. Bees do it. Even educated fleas do it. Sport. Or is that shagging? Whatever. Anyway, we asked **Patrick McCarthy** to guide us down the dark and scary lane of PC sports games, avoid the yellow-eyed evil behind the hedge and take us by the hand to the Welcoming Inn of the Classy Sports Game. (What? Ed.)

# SPORTS for all

**L**ET'S FACE IT, SPORT IS A WASTE OF time. All that pointless running about in ridiculously brightly-coloured clothing made entirely from by-products of the petrochemical industry, sucking in great gobfuls of polluted, asthma-inducing air, battering your ligaments until they're the consistency of cottage cheese is not only unhealthy, it's extremely unstylish. And it has so many other drawbacks, too. If you want to be seriously good at any sport, you can't get pissed every night and spend all day eating shitty foodstuffs, or your performance will suffer. (I'm discounting darts as a sport, here.)

## Eat the world

Which is where computer games come in: one of the main attractions about computer sports games is that not only can you get pissed and eat shitty foodstuffs and still pursue your chosen

sport, but that you can do it *at the same time*, and really get to work on your task of having a body like a middle-aged long-distance lorry driver with a morbid fear of fruit and vegetables.

The thing is, whereas computer games from other genres eventually pall, a good sports game has an almost indefinite playing-life: you never really 'finish' it. You can always load up a golf game when you fancy a round, a football game when you fancy a match, or an ice hockey game when you fancy beating the crap out of something.

## Get a life

The other main attraction of a sports game is that you can be infinitely better at sport on a computer, with far less effort, than you can in real life. If you were sad and pathetic enough to want to be a professional golfer and take part in a major golf tournament, you'd have to have spent 90 percent of your life, from the age of six months, practising golf in all weathers, missing Christmas dinners and teenage sex and never

learning to read or write. Whereas if you want to play golf on a computer, you just shell out for the appropriate game and plunge into the fray without even having to don a selection of novelty knitwear. You certainly don't have to practise, and yet there you are, playing alongside household names and beating them. There are people who've played real golf all their lives and never hit a hole-in-one. And yet I, and thousands of others, have. On our computers. And we've saved the files to prove it.

## Even breasts don't hold you back

Computer sport is also the only chance chicks have of being as good as blokes at anything. Women may deny it, or claim they're more concerned with giving birth and that whole cycle-of-life-and-death-thing that upper-middle class female novelists from Hampstead seem so keen on, but let's face it, in any sport, for every so-called top female sportswoman, there's a bloke who's better. Except in computer sport, where all are equal. And if they're not, you can adjust the difficulty levels. So there you have it. Sport is a waste of time. But computer sport is cool. Now read on. »





## FOOTBALL

### Actua Soccer (Gremlin, £39.99)

Currently nestling nine points clear at the top of the league with a game in hand in the arcade football game championships, *Actua Soccer* has its share of irritating faults but still manages to see off the opposition because of its great looks and ease of playability. The goalies dive with all the aplomb of Douglas Bader after six pints of Dogbolter, and control switches between players while you desperately try to make a tackle, but it's still one of only two games that get played every day in the Zone office. And it's still being improved: so make sure you watch out for *Actua 2 Euro 96*.



## RUGBY UNION

### World Cup Rugby 95 (Electronic Arts, £39.99)

To be honest, there's never really been a decent Rugby Union game, largely because the game itself is so static and dominated by forwards in scrums, rucks and mauls. This invariably leads unimaginative designers to drag out that hoary old gameplay chestnut, joystick-wagging, which is bad for expensive PC joysticks, leaves you with RSI or forearms like Popeye, and has the well-documented built-in embarrassment factor if you're caught doing it by a loved one. But Electronic Art's effort just about gets the vote, despite the familiar problem throughout their sports games of players doing stuff without being told, if only because *World Cup Rugby 95* graphically superior to the competition.



## FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT

### Championship Manager 2 (Domark, £44.99)

Far and away the most accurate, engrossing, satisfying and enjoyable football management game around, there are way too many features to even start listing them here. It's a football fan's dream, letting you take control of any British league club you desire and battle your way to the top, hopefully getting the England job in the process. *Championship Manager 2* features a superb, intuitive interface and a database of players that will keep you happy for months on end. And just when we thought we'd managed to wean ourselves off the thing for a couple of weeks, out come the data disks featuring the Italian, French and German leagues, and, wouldn't you know it, productivity plunges once again.



## CRICKET

### Ian Botham's International Cricket (Beam, £34.99)

There's no such thing as a classic cricket game on the PC - or any other format, for that matter - but this is as near as you get. All eight major Test-playing nations are included (with fictional, but occasionally familiar-looking, players) and you can play Test and One-day matches. The animation's a bit ropery, and the FMV footage brings new meaning to the term low budget. But like the SNES version which sold so well last summer, it's very playable, and the best offering in a sparsely populated genre.

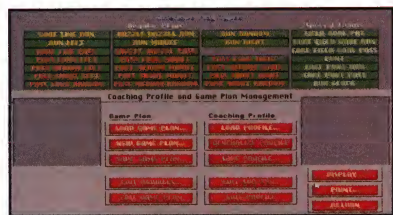


## TENNIS

### International Tennis Open (Phillips Media, £39.99)

*ITO* was praised to high heaven when it came out, but some of us remain unconvinced. It has a fiddly control method, and a complicated range of options as to how much control you have over the player - you can control everything, just control your movement about the court and let the computer play your shots (hold me back), or just play shots and let the computer move you (that sounds more exciting, doesn't it?). Basically this highlights the fact that they haven't got it quite right - and it's bloody hard against the computer. It's okay as a two-player game, though, and the digitised players and full spoken commentary are good. I'd rather play *Super Tennis* any day, but that's on the SNES so it doesn't count.





## AMERICAN FOOTBALL

### Front Page Sports Football Pro 96 (Sierra, £44.99)

This year's upgrade of the best American football game by a mile, features unlimited camera angles and an almost cartoon-like representation of the players. *Front Page Sports Football Pro 96* lets you play in coach-and-play mode, where you control everything, or coach-only, with players carrying out your instructions to their statistically-accurate utmost (there are over 300 areas of player-ratings). The play-editor is simply superb, with an intuitive menu system that will have you spending hours creating ever more bizarre plays. Attention to detail is excellent throughout: the manual has clear tutorials, quickstart and troubleshooter sections, a quick reference card and even a recommended reading list for those who want to know more about NFL strategy. For those who just want to get into a small dark room and bash their helmet against the wall, it also has a generous degree of instant playability.

## BASEBALL

### Front Page Sports Baseball 96 (Sierra, £44.99)

Sierra have the monopoly on the top American sports games: *FPS Baseball* is the best baseball game around. Basically, it's 'borrowed' all the good bits from other people's efforts and combined them to great effect - pitch selection, hitting and fielding and the general controls are similar to those from *Hardball*, other elements are reminiscent of *Tony La Russa*, and the graphics are better than both. And of course, as it's baseball, and as it's from Sierra, it has more statistics than a panicking Conservative MP on *Question Time*.



### I Can't Believe They Did That Corner Subbuteo

A few years ago some moron actually brought out a computer Subbuteo game. That's a sports simulation of a simulation of a sport, sports fans. The players had big plastic bases and the interface controlled where you put the finger to 'flick' the player. Only in showbusiness.



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**PC Gamer - Score 91%**

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**PC Zone - Score 90%**

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**PC Review - Score 8/10**

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**PC Format - Score 84%**

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**CD-ROM User - Score 93%**



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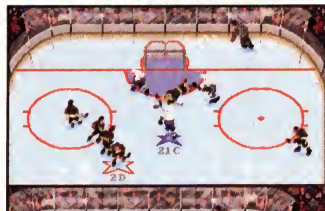
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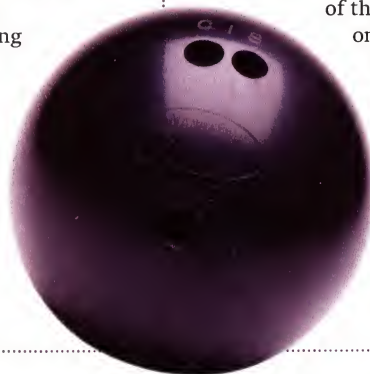




## ICE HOCKEY

### NHL Hockey 96 (EA, £44.99)

EA's annual upgrade of its ice hockey game is the first to feature the new Virtual Stadium approach, which means camera angles galore for in-game viewing, a free-floating camera for replays and fans who seem to be lying on their backs. Aside from that it's all the usual stuff: every NHL team, with all the players statistically accurate down to the correct number of sunken occipital bones; exhibition games, full seasons, or play-offs; multiple difficulty levels and selectable penalties. It takes about five seconds to get the hang of the controls, and before long you're stringing passes together, hitting first-time shots and smacking opponents into the boards like a psychotic veteran. The animation and presentation is excellent, sound effects are great and the fights are cool.



## TEN-PIN BOWLING (snort)

### Kingpin Arcade Sports Bowling (Team 17, £19.99)

Believe it or not, someone has actually made a ten-pin bowling simulation, and they've been incredibly anal about it too. It tells you how much wax is on the bowling lane when you start, so you can adjust the spin you put on your ball accordingly (it even - and here my brain started to melt at the edges - warns you that the aforementioned wax will wear off with use). And I realise we're getting into the realms of the ridiculous now, but it isn't too bad, for what it is.

At a pinch, it might be one of those games you put on with a few mates when you're pissed and want a laugh (as long as you didn't pay money for it). The sound effects are crap, though. And you don't get a free wrist strap.

## BASKETBALL

### NBA Live 96 (EA, £44.99)

Netball for overactive pituitary gland victims (as basketball is more properly known) is well-represented on every computer format, and EA have had about 300 games on each one, so they should be getting it right by now. This year's version of NBA features their ubiquitous Virtual Stadium technology, with its swirly cameras and surprisingly noisy cardboard cut-out fans. There are seasons to play, play-offs to be the winningest in, and all the right players with all the right stats and all the right facial disfigurements - they look a bit ropey close-up, but they vaguely resemble the real-life players. Things can get a bit confusing under the basket, but it's fast and playable, immaculately presented and refreshingly violent.



## PASTIMES

### Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker (Virgin, Available on budget)

Is snooker a sport? Nah. It's a pastime. So we don't need to tell you that Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker is still the best snooker game, largely by dint of the fact that the upcoming Virtual Snooker is actually snooker set on a pool table, which is the wrong size and shape, and doesn't have little nets, it has pockets... so that it should actually be called Virtual Pool With Snooker Balls. Virtual Pool with pool balls, on the other hand, is a good pool game. But then so is Archer Maclean's Pool. That's the thing about pastimes. They're not clear cut.

## Future sport\*

\*As in sports games that will be appearing in the near future, not one of those poxy 'in the future, all sports will be virtual' features you see dotted about in style mags.

There are currently more sports games on the way than there are festering blisters on a Scottish sunbather, but here's just a couple of the more prominent ones.

### Madden NFL 96

EA are finally going to bring out a decent PC version of John Madden Football. In the past, the game that's wowed them on every other format in the known universe has been, not to put too fine a point on it, a steaming pile of cack on the PC. Or, to put it another way, a mouse-controlled game that was strong on tactics and play design, but almost totally lacking on every other front.

Now, however, it's finally getting the treatment it deserves. Utilising EA's much-hyped Virtual Stadium technology - meaning there'll be loads of different camera angles and a crowd that seem to be made out of old deckchairs - it promises play-by-play commentary from Mr Aerophobia himself, along with bland platitudes and chuckling to order from his commentary partner Pat Summerall. Like all self-respecting sports games these days, player sprites will be motion-captured from real NFL players. Each player will also have his own little NFL-authorised profile for you to look at, so you can see exactly why he didn't get his hands on the ball to make that game-winning catch. "According to the psychological profile, it's because of his childhood, Pat. The guy saw his father naked in the bath."

### Power Sports Soccer

Depending on your viewpoint, Power Sports Soccer, from Psygnosis, is either the most eagerly-awaited football game this year, or the most over-hyped football game this year.

Again, it features motion-captured players, but the reason it's so looked-forward to is more to do with its weird AI-system, which controls animation in such a way that your players can start moving before they even get the ball, and carry on moving after they've either got rid of the ball or been hacked down (or, given that they're French, not been touched at all).





# DESTINY

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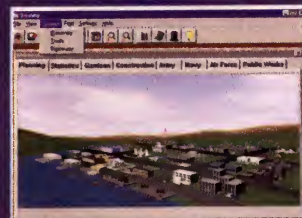
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## **Seal Team**

The game we're looking forward to more than any other is **Sim Seal Cull**, coming soon from Bludgeonsoft Interactive, with a dedicated infra-red baseball bat included in the price of £79.99. The texture-mapped baby seals have to be seen to be believed – we love it when their eyes get that “You won’t hurt me, I’m cute” look.

(Below) No seal pups were injured during the production of this article.





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Is it possible to fall in love with a computer? Well, this one's certainly had a strange effect on **Tim Ponting**.

# Mesh Elite Pro 133 Pentium

**PC**  
Classic  
**ZONE**  
Classic



**P**CS ARE just so bloody good these days... it makes you want to puke if you spent two grand on a fully-tooled 486 a year ago. There's never a right time to buy a new PC - there's always something bigger and better waiting around the corner, or failing that at least a drop in price of existing technology. So I'll stop whinging and tell you why I now hate my 486. Completely.

I've been using a Mesh Elite Pro fitted with 133MHz Pentium and ludicrous support components for a while, and I'm deeply in love. Even in this age of ubiquitous Intel motherboard chipsets where the differences between systems are becoming less noticeable, this Mesh stands out. We've had a few of the newer Pentiums under our belt, and the Mesh is arguably the best. Why?

Well, it's because there's no weak link. The motherboard is fitted with 256K of super-fast asynchronous SRAM and 16MB of EDO main RAM; and, then there's the fact that it's a 133MHz machine, which at the time of this review is the fastest Pentium chip available. Mesh now sell

the 150MHz for less than this would have cost four months ago, and that's a bargain. If this weren't enough, the graphics card supplied is a 2MB Matrox Millennium: for DOS games - and there's nothing faster. Any machine fitted with this card shows an improvement on the *Doom 2* frame rate test, and games like *Nascar*, *IndyCar 2* and *US Navy Fighters* run in SVGA at exceptional frame rates. Much faster, in fact, than the 120MHz IPC machine I reviewed previously.

## Getting up to speed

The CD-ROM drive supplied at my request was a twin-speeder. In retrospect, I should have gone for a quad, which is the slowest Mesh would now be supplying with the machine. If six-speed is your fancy, that too can be provided. The advantage of a faster drive is not so much improved FMV performance (most games are happy with double-speed), but with loading and install times (faster CD players copy files very quickly). This is great news if you are a frequent sampler of cover CDs, for instance, or regularly have to reformat your hard drive to re-install Windows 95, like most users of Windows 95 do.

The BIOS is of the Plug 'n' Play type: a range of PnP cards worked as intended, including a Dataflex PC Comms Office and a couple of sound cards, which is more than can be said of several earlier BIOSes. Sound services are supplied by an OEM AWE-32, currently the best value for money card for gamers. Everything works with it, and Windows 95 seems happier with Creative products than with any others. You shouldn't face any compatibility problems here. A GigaByte hard drive supplies more than enough room for the demands of Windows 95, and a handful of games chucked on with 'Full Install' option activated.

Admittedly, most P133 systems are going to come close, but the Mesh scores highly for the gamesplayer in terms of component choice. Not only that, you get a full range of manuals right down to the motherboard itself: there's even one for the hard drive. It may not seem useful now, but for upgrading every bit of info about a component is vital. Add to that the fact that Mesh itself is also a company that's been around for many years, giving a security that some of the newer brands can't offer, but without a corresponding hike in price. All in all, this system is a definite Classic. **Z**

**Score**

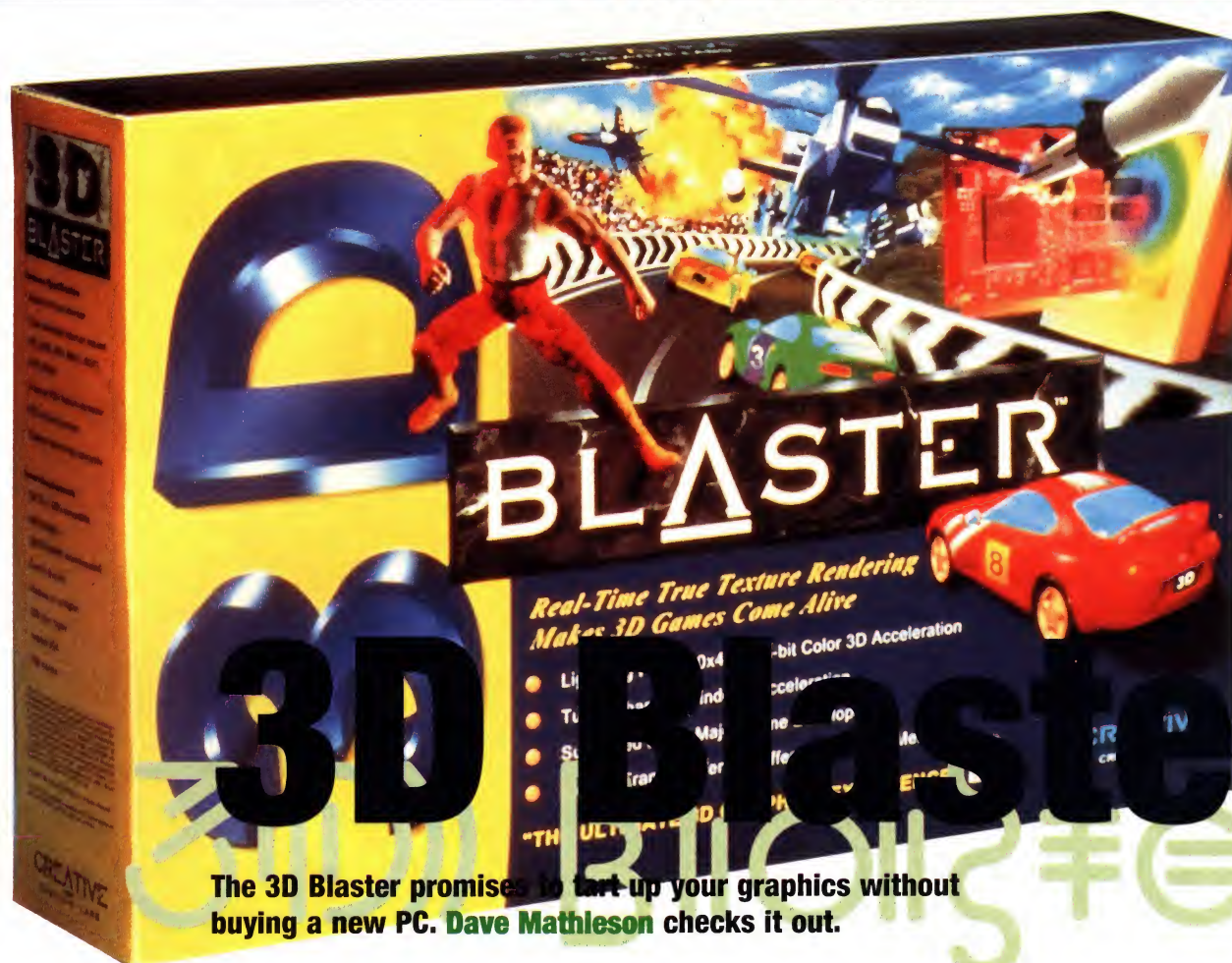
**91**

**If it wasn't designed with a gamesplayer in mind I'll eat my hat. Great performance at a keen price.**

**Price:** £2285 Incl VAT **Release Date:** Out now  
**Manufacturer:** Mesh  
**Tel:** 0181-452 1111

**GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."





The 3D Blaster promises to start up your graphics without buying a new PC. Dave Mathleson checks it out.

**W**E'VE BEEN SAYING FOR SOME time now that 3D graphics accelerator cards are set to be the next big thing, and the promise of arcade-in-your-PC action has kept plenty of people (us included) waiting with bated breath. But why all the anticipation? Well, put simply it's down to the fact that normal PCs can't handle decent 3D graphics – although Pentiums are pretty nippy bits of hardware, they're designed for all sorts of calculations. However, 3D graphics

require a fairly specific set of operations, and while a general processor such as a Pentium can perform them using its own simpler instructions, things can be speeded up considerably using custom chips that perform all these operations in hardware.

The problem facing manufacturers is to design their hardware so that games developers can write programs that will utilise it. Arcade machines often use both hardware and software developed by the same company. On the other

hand, PCs have thrived because anyone can, in theory, develop programs and hardware that will work with them. What this means for 3D graphics is that the card's manufacturer has to ensure that programmers have access to the functions it provides. Once they've done this, the next task is to persuade games companies that it's worth developing for their card (you guessed it – all of the cards on the market, or in development, are incompatible with each other). One company with extensive experience at setting standards is Creative Labs, as anyone who's tried to market a non-SoundBlaster compatible sound card will tell you.

### Blasting Into the future

The 3D Blaster is only the second major 3D accelerator card to hit the market, following extremely hot on the heels of the Diamond Edge we reviewed in our February issue. While both have their respective figures covering things like polygons per second, Z-buffering, and maximum Gouraud light-sourcing anti-jerkvision tolerance thresholds, when it comes down to it these are all a pile of meaningless bollocks (yes, even the last one). The only way to separate the two cards is to try them out, a strategy rendered temporarily impossible by a quirk of the marketing department at Creative. The problem is that while the Diamond Edge runs on machines with PCI buses, this first version of the 3D







Creative Labs have bundled four games with the 3D Blaster, including *Hi-Octane* (left and far left) and *Magic Carpet* (below).

Blaster is designed for machines with VESA buses. "Hang on," you may ask, "isn't that the type of bus fitted to old, crap PCs?" "Aha!" says Mr Labs. "That's the whole point. A previously crap PC will be rendered considerably less so by the addition of a 3D Blaster." Which makes sense. Sort of.

### Up and running

This is what you get for your £300: 3D acceleration in SVGA resolutions, plus a standard Windows accelerator, and four versions of games specially written for the card (*Hi-Octane*, *Magic Carpet*, *NASCAR Racing* and *Rebel Moon*, which is a *Doom*-style title). The card itself fits into a standard VESA slot, and it links up with your existing graphics card using an external connecting cable.

The accompanying floppy contains drivers for DOS, Windows 3.1 and its glamorous big sister, Windows 95 (this by the way, is another difference with the Diamond Edge, which is designed only for Windows 95).

Installation itself isn't quite as simple as it could be, mainly down to the fact that it requires its own IRQ. This means a fair bit of juggling in DOS, although the installation program itself is pretty helpful. Installation under Windows 95 works using Plug-and-Play, which means that the card and your PC should have a little chat and then work it out between them, without your intervention; but this didn't work quite as smoothly as it should either, probably because the PC I tried it on didn't have a Plug-and-Play BIOS (but not many VESA machines do). Fortunately, the manual is fairly helpful here, although having a slightly inflated opinion of my talents, I didn't bother looking at it until I'd tried absolutely everything else (including swearing, which surprisingly also failed to work). It turned out that I had to disable my old graphics card first. Silly me.

"But what are the bloody graphics like then?" you're probably wondering. The first thing to remember is that the 3D Blaster accelerates SVGA graphics.

Anyone who's tried to run *Hi-Octane* in SVGA on anything less than a Pentium will know what a complete waste of time this is. The frame rate is so low that you've done half a lap, used up all your missiles, and been blown to pieces before the damn screen updates. The 3D Blaster manages to do a lot better than this on a 486, which is pretty darn good if you look at it like this. Unfortunately, when you've got an itchy joystick finger, you're not inclined to sit back, take into account the technical difficulties that 3D acceleration involves, and quietly come to the conclusion that the card has done a pretty good job, all things considered. You want super-fast, gut-wrenching action that will make you duck up and down in your seat.

Sadly, the 3D Blaster doesn't quite manage this, and while playable, the games I tried weren't exactly smooth. But seeing SVGA moving at this speed on a 486 is impressive, and I'd like to see the Blaster in action on a slightly less demanding SVGA game (such as *US Navy Fighters* or *Apache Longbow*). Even more impressive should be the PCI version of the card due out soon, which should help all those slow-Pentium owners.

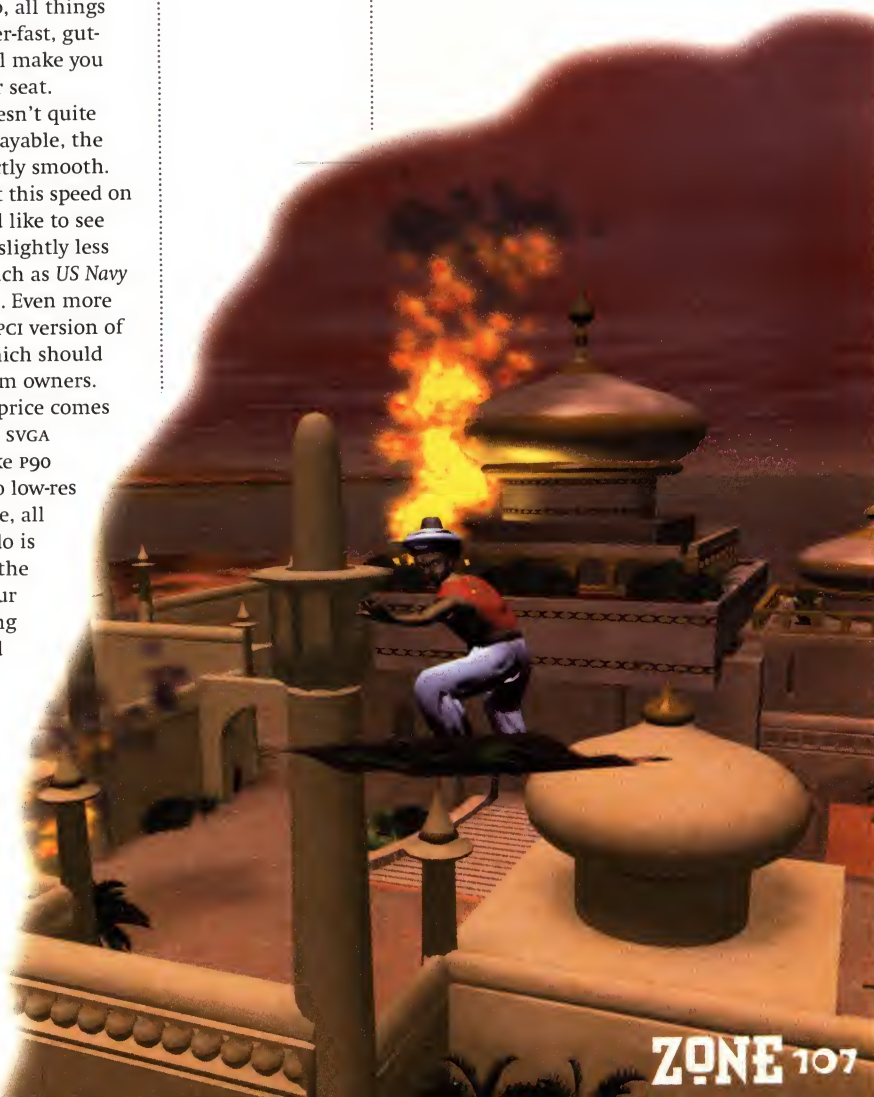
If it's worth the asking price comes down to whether you rate SVGA graphics over speed. Unlike P90 owners, who can switch to low-res for an improved frame rate, all someone with a 486 can do is turn off detail to achieve the same effect. If speed is your thing and a bit of tinkering doesn't scare you, it could be worth considering a new motherboard and CPU. However, this is a pretty major operation, and while a 3D Blaster won't significantly affect the frame rate on such machines, having four times as many graphics on the screen at once certainly helps pep things up. **Z**

Score

74

**Fine if you want SVGA graphics on your 486, but for the same money maybe a Pentium upgrade is the better option.**

**Price:** £293 incl VAT **Release Date:** Out now  
**Manufacturer:** Creative Labs  
**Tel:** 01734 344744





# ViewSonic 17GA

There are plenty of jokes to be made about how size is important when reviewing monitors, but **Dave Mathieson** managed to avoid resorting to them when confronted with this 17-incher.

**T**HE MONITOR IS ONE OF THE most underrated pieces of computer hardware. This is probably because the majority of people have been watching telly all their lives (for a good proportion of the time, in some cases), so it's not surprising that monitors don't feature particularly high on our "ooh, isn't that clever?" lists. The thing is, though, that only extremely stupid people sit watching a television on a desk 18 inches away from their face. Monitors, on the other hand, are designed for just this, and a crap one will make your head hurt after a while (something that loads of dosh spent on a virtual reality headset can achieve in minutes).

While most PCs are supplied with 14 or 15-inch monitors, bigger ones are normally thought of as 'a bit posh', and not really worth the extra money which could be better spent on new hardware to bump up frame rates, for example. Admittedly, paying 700 quid to make the blockiness in *Doom* even bigger is a bit pointless, but the extra detail that SVGA games offer can be somewhat wasted on a cheap 14-inch job.

Though ViewSonic's 17GA is a budget 17-incher (of which there are many, all of varying quality), it distinguishes itself by having built-in speakers and a microphone, earning it the title "Multimedia Monitor" (well, according to ViewSonic, anyway). But while this marriage of two technologies is pretty original as far as monitors are concerned, it's surprising that no one has attempted it before, especially since TV designers have been doing it for decades.

## Take control

Like most other decent monitors, the 17GA uses on-screen controls for adjustment. These are accessed through a row of buttons on the front panel, in two groups for audio and visual respectively. The former are simple volume up/down

and mute buttons, although there's no balance control – but that particular function would be rendered pointless anyway, if you take into account the fact that the two speakers either side of the screen are always going to be the same distance from the listener.

## Getting in the picture

Picture adjustment on the ViewSonic is considerably more extensive, and the settings are accessed through a series of menus using two 'select' buttons to actually do something, and left/right buttons to move around. But apart from the conventional contrast, brightness, and horizontal and vertical size and position, there are many other options not usually found on cheaper monitors; trapezoid controls the difference in width between the picture at the top

and bottom of the screen, while pincushion lets you pinch the sides in, or push them out. Parallelogram and rotation allow you to do even sillier things, and there are also colour options for controlling the exact amounts of red and blue in the picture. While all this may sound a bit pointless, quirks that would be insignificant on a smaller monitor can assume irritating proportions on a 17-inch unit, and ViewSonic have been wise to include them.

The picture quality of the 17GA monitor is good, and although it's not as bright as some, it is very steady, and I had no problem running Windows in 1024x768. What's more, there's very little blurring or mis-alignment. The latter is particularly common in a lot







of cheaper 17-inchers, and manifests itself as a separation of the red or blue parts of an image, usually at the corners of the screen. If you're interested, this is caused by the difficulty of keeping the beams representing each of the three primary colours together, between the gun and the screen itself. If you're not interested though, just content yourself with the fact that it's a pain.

The audio portion of the 17GA monitor is easily connected to your sound card via a set of supplied cables into a pair of stereo inputs, and a mic output in the back of the monitor. The sound quality is nothing special, but it's certainly as good, if not better, than most of the cheap speakers that come bundled with multimedia systems. However, the real advantage, of course, is the neatness of the whole arrangement, and having both speakers and microphone in front of you in the optimal positions makes up for any deficiencies there may be in the sound itself.

As always, the big question has to be whether or not it's worth spending the equivalent of half the cost of a pretty good PC on a monitor, and this one in particular. In answer to the first point, I can only say that you should expect years of life from a decent monitor, as well as the fact that it should retain its value far more than any PC. And should you be opting to buy the 17GA? Well, its audio capabilities make it stand out from the crowd, and it's also a pretty good monitor in its own right. It's well worth a look if you want a bigger gaming environment. **Z**

**Score**

**80**

**A nice 17-inch monitor that stands out from the crowd by being noisy as well.**

**Price:** £763 incl VAT\* **Release Date:** Out now  
**Manufacturer:** ViewSonic  
**Tel:** 0181-781 6986 \*approximate price

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20-96-04





Faster than a speeding bullet, smelling worse than an onion bhaji way past its sell-by date (and with a face like a bulldog chewing a wasp), the Boggit is back to dispense wisdom and insults in equal measures.



# TROUBLESHOOTER



**Trueplayer™  
Tips**

Telephone

**0171  
917  
7698**

**Ask for TruePlayer™ Tips  
from 2.00pm to 6.00pm  
on Wednesdays only.**

Just ring this number and ask all the latest tips, cheats, hacks, cracks, solutions and spoils for all the latest games. This is not an answering machine. This is not a premium line number. A real person on the other end of the line will be happy to oblige you.



**The Bottom  
Line**

**If you get into trouble or  
are a bit scared, ring us  
on TruePlayer Tips day  
(Wednesday 2pm to 6pm) for  
free tips support.**

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## READ THIS!

Because our tips line is so busy, and because the man who answers the phone is only a mere mortal we need you to prove that you have actually bought the magazine and that you're not just a freeloading blagger. To do this, our tips geezer will ask you for a password before you request your tip. This month's password is... "I don't believe in the Easter Bunny".



## Myst

I'm hopelessly stuck in Myst, and have been for weeks. I'm on the stone age ship and have the following problems:

- I just can't turn on or move the submersible lights
  - I can't turn on any of the lights in the stern cabin. (However, I suspect that the submersible lights will light the cabin for me to find clues)
  - Every time I try something with the compass in the tunnel between the two ends of the ship all the lights go out.
- I've found the red and blue papers, but still can't find a way forward. I know that whatever I've missed will be be something easy, and that it will be infuriatingly obvious when pointed out, but please help me.

**S C Carter, Hemel Hempstead**

I once tried to kiss a girl in the fog – and mist. (Hmm... that doesn't sound so funny when you write it down.) Anyway, the lights are powered by a battery which is charged by the player having to do a bit of hand cranking (I'll resist the obvious bad joke at this point).

First find the crow's nest with an umbrella over it. There are three buttons inside which control pumps which empty the water from three different sections. Pump out the lighthouse and find the chest inside. Drain all of the water from the chest and then close the drainage valve. Flood the lighthouse again – the chest will now be floating next to the key which opens it. Inside the chest is a second key which fits the trap door at the top of the lighthouse and, as you would expect, the light source is inside.

Now go to the telescope over the wooden bridge and check the position of the beacon. Once you get to the compass, click on the

## Write to PC Zone

If you have a query concerning a role-playing game or adventure, or you have a hot tip or a cheat to share, then write to:

**The Boggit  
29 Blackthorn Drive  
Larkfield, Aylesford  
KENT ME20 6NR**

button at the beacon heading (135 degrees). Bingo! That should finally put an end to all your weeks of misery.

...And the Boggit said, "Let there be light." And there was light. And they could see for miles and bloody miles!

## Lands Of Lore

Maybe you can help me with a small problem? *Lands Of Lore* has been a thorn in my side for three months now. I've carried the saved games into work on floppies for other like-minded people to stumble over at dinner time, worked late into the night to find ways to make the shrine in the white tower accept my hard won slime, earth and swarm, but to no avail. It accepts the earth but nothing else.

**Graham Jordan, Eastbourne**

Well, fancy that... what kind of a shrine would refuse slime and swarms of wasps? Why are some shrines so choosy when they should just be bloody grateful? (Can we just get on with this please? – Ed.) Wait a minute – I haven't got round to threatening to tell his boss about him using the firm's computers in the lunch hour yet!

All right then, back to *Lands Of Lore*... For a start you have to have the crucible of faith, which can be picked up from the old woman who is also knocking about in the pits. When you've got the crucible, mix these four ingredients together in it: swamp water, hornet honey, bloodstone and mother earth.

Sadie will give you mother earth (but only if you actually paid for the information from the witch doctor). Use a flask on a hornet's nest to get some honey. A second flask can be filled with swamp water and, finally, you can pick up a bloodstone in the mines once you slay a few stone monsters.

| HEX | DECIMAL |
|-----|---------|
| 09H | 09      |
| 0AH | 10      |
| 0FH | 15      |
| 10H | 16      |
| 20H | 32      |
| 28H | 40      |
| 32H | 50      |
| 40H | 64      |
| 63H | 99      |
| 64H | 100     |
| C8H | 200     |
| FAH | 250     |
| FFH | 255     |



## Discworld

Could you tell me (using your mighty intellect) what to do with the bloody carpet in Discworld?

### Wobbit, Beaconsfield

If I were to tell you to "Beat it!" would you take the hint? The carpet is used to cross the gorge which is found just outside the city gates. And has anyone ever told you that you have a bloody silly name?

## Dungeon Master

I bought the classic Dungeon Master game only a few months ago, but whatever I do I just can't get further than Level 3. I came across a large room with many exits and got totally stuck in two of these passageways. I can't pass the pit which is in a room that you enter by pushing a button to open the door, and then run through before it closes.

### A Antoniou, Cyprus

Well, thanks a lot for making things easy for me by omitting the name of the passage that you are stuck in – I suppose you thought that would be too simple. Let's guess that you are stuck in the passage called 'time is of the essence'. If that's the case, then the pit you are talking about is controlled by a pressure plate which is hidden around a corner. You'll see a wall switch beside the pit – press this, then throw a heavy object directly into the blue transporter field which appears for just a moment. Voilà! The object will be magically transported around the corner straight onto the pressure pad – hence closing the pit.

## Hand Of Fate

I've been trying to get past the rat in the caves. I think I have to make the swamp snake potion. Am I right? If so, where I can get a windy woof?

### Iain Managhan, Wellesbourne

Where can you get a windy woof? Is this a wind-up? I've been inundated with letters that are just begging for a rude reply this month! If you really want, you could come round to my bedroom with a jam jar around 7am and I'm sure I could fill it up for you...

But yes, you're right, swamp snake potion is the answer to your problem. You'll need to put onion, sulphur rock, hot water, reptile tears and a toadstool into a cauldron.

You can obtain a flask of water from under the carpet, the onion can be pulled up from beyond the gnarlwood tree. Empty the flask over the everglowing fireberries to empty it. The toadstool comes from Herb's house. Feed the onion to the alligator, then collect his tears in the flask. Take the cauldron from the hollow in the tree. Collect hot water from the sulphur spring and get a piece of sulphur rock. Fill your flask with the mucky green liquid and use it on the rat.

Now we come to the dark side of the game world where the cheats and hackers dig and delve. Of course true warriors and noble avatars will have no need to read this section...



## Warcraft 2

And as the glow of Command & Conquer's mighty mushroom cloud slowly dimmed, along came Warcraft 2 to jostle for the coveted position of 'Warmonger's Game of the Moment'. If you're finding things too tough, then try these:

|              |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| ECSTASY      | Victory                  |
| END THE PAIN | Defeat                   |
| GO BEZERK    | Invulnerability/strength |
| KRYAL CASTLE | 1000 gold, 5000 lumber   |
| VALDEZ       | 5000 oil                 |
| VERY COSMIC  | Extra damage             |
| YOU OWE ME   | Finish the game          |
| SHOW PATH    | Display entire map       |
| HATCHET      | Speed up tree cutting    |
| MAKE IT SO   | Instant building         |
| NOGLUE       | Destroys rune traps      |

NB: If you need to resort to any of the above, you're just a bloody wimp. (After all, if I can stay up to 3am to beat it, then so should you!)

## Hexen

Although I thought that Heretic was brilliant, I must confess that I didn't spend too much time wrestling with its successor, Hexen, mainly because it made me feel seasick after a short time. If the game is making you feel nauseous for other reasons, then here is all you need to know to make you feel better:

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| SATAN        | God mode                                     |
| BUTCHER      | No monsters                                  |
| CLUBMED      | 100% health                                  |
| LOCKSMITH    | All keys                                     |
| INDIANA      | All artefacts                                |
| DELIVERANCE  | Pig mode                                     |
| MAPSCO       | Reveals map                                  |
| SHERLOCK     | All puzzle keys and items                    |
| SHADOWCASTER | Change class (0,1,2 = warrior, cleric, mage) |

## Alone In The Dark 2

Begin by collecting the poison in the kitchen by the dumb waiter and the

poison from the work surface in the kitchen. Now make the poisoned wine and drink it. Hold the <ENTER> key down until the screen goes into the inventory and action list. You will see that your body points display is on approximately minus 1000; repeat this process until the minus disappears and you'll end up with approximately 32,000 points. You can increase this even further, and stop yourself by getting drunk at the end of the process by collecting the frying pan beforehand and using it when you get to 32,000 points.

## Cannon Fodder

To skip levels go to the map screen, hold down <CTRL> and type <Fodder>. At this point a white border will appear around the screen. Exit the map and return to the game – when you now press <ENTER> the level will complete.

## Colonization (version 1.2)

Hold down <ALT> and type <WIN> to access the cheat menu.

## Descent

Turn on the cheat mode by typing <GABBAGABBAHEY>:

|            |                         |
|------------|-------------------------|
| SCOURGE    | Weapons                 |
| MITZI      | Keys                    |
| RACERX     | Invulnerability         |
| GUILE      | Cloak                   |
| TWILIGHT   | Shields                 |
| FARMER JOE | Warp to different level |
| ALT/F      | Show map                |
| BIGRED     | Super weapons           |
| BUGGIN     | Turbo mode              |
| BRUIN      | Extra life              |
| FLASH      | Extra path illuminated  |
| AHIMSA     | Toggles robot firing    |

## Quarantine

Start the game with these parameters: CHEATER INFINITE NOCAR INVINC

Once you're in the game, just press <ALT/CTRL/F7> before anyone hits you (or you hit them) to become invincible.

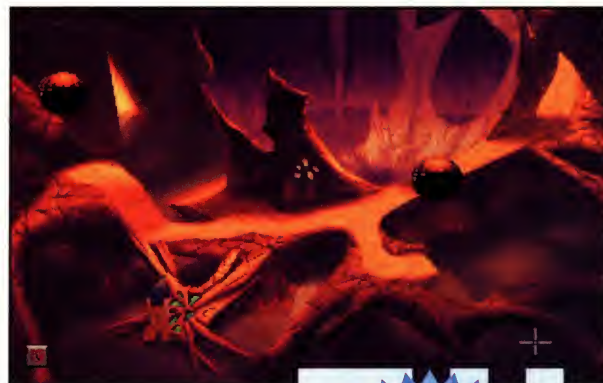
Thanks to Iain MacMillan and Leigh Richardson for helping out with some of this month's cheats.





(Right) This is your last chance to murmur a few romantic words into Maggie's shell-like, for any moment now she's going to give up her life for you. "Gee thanks, Maggie!"

(Far right) Before the alien device can be activated, the missing bits for this console must be found and inserted into the holes.



An exciting storyline, terrific artwork and wonderful music combine to make this graphical adventure one of the best of its genre. Just to make sure you don't miss out on any of the excitement, this month we give you a step by step guide to the alien world.

# The Dig



## On the shuttle

Use the pen ultimate to talk to Miles, then click on the flying pig. Click on the pig again to open it up, then take everything out of it. Click on space. Go to quadrant 2 and use the digger with the target surface.

Use the explosive unit alpha with the dirt, then use the arming key with the explosive unit alpha. Click on space and go to quadrant 3. Use the shovel with the boulder. Use the explosive unit beta with the surface. Use the arming key with the explosive unit beta. Click on space. Go to the shuttle.

Use the pen ultimate to talk to Ken Borden about explosives, then return to the asteroid.

## The asteroid

Click on the metallic plate, then use the digger on all four odd projections. Click on all four metallic plates. Now click on the dark tunnel.

Click on the pedestal. Get all four plates. Click on the square indentation. Use all four plates on the square.

## On the planet

Go to the clearing, then to the wreck. Click on the wreck, open the chest and get the device. Pull the hanging wire.

Get the wire and the engraved rod. Now return to the clearing and go to the grave at the top of the screen. Get the tusk and use the shovel on the grave. Pick up the jaw bone. Go to the

clearing. Go to the right of the screen (the dirt ramp). Use the device. Use the shovel with the small mound. Get the bracelet. Move to the dais. Use the shovel with the small hole. It's at this point that Brinks falls to his death.

## Nexus

Get the plate from the floor then move right to find the purple engraved rod; once you've got it, examine it. No doors can be opened yet, as the power has to be turned on first. Move down the ramp (at the bottom of the screen, near the dark tunnel). Click on the edge. Look at the unattached lens. Click again on the edge to change the view, then click on the control panel. There are seven



ZONE

switch





buttons to control a robot: top white is backspace, bottom white is clear.

In order to get the lens you have to use the robot: select purple four times, yellow twice and red once. Exit the control panel, leaving it lit and click on the triangular button. Watch the video.

Click on the control panel again, and then push bottom white to clear it. To restore power and open a door you will need to select purple five times, blue four times and red once.

Exit the control panel, but leave it lit. Click on the triangular button. Take the blue crystal and return to Nexus. Use the code of the purple rod to open the door to the left of the dark tunnel.

Go through the open door and click on the tram call. Enter the tram and travel to the museum spire.

### Museum spire

Attempt to open the weakened door. Go outside, in an upwards direction. Create the light bridge as follows: click on the strange device. Click and hold down the switch. If necessary, move the lens.

Use the light bridge, then look at the crystal. Go back to the museum spire. Enter the museum and get the tablet. Get the glowing crystals. Click on all the displays to see the videos. Get the red engraved rod. Enter the door to the library through the one to the left. Talk with Maggie Robbins about everything and use the tram to return to Nexus.

### Nexus

Use the tusk on the panel which is next to the sparking cable. Use the wire on the open panel; when you've done that, use the wire with the sparks.



(Above left) These crystals would put a grin on a corpse – but unfortunately Brinks has yet to find out that though they give you a great buzz, there's a drawback...

(Above right) An alien world, with an 'Alien' spaceship. Don't go poking your face into any alien Easter eggs, whatever you do!

(Below left) Once you clear away the dirt and open the skylight, the light from the heavens can be directed into the tomb below.

(Below right) A magical tram system runs beneath the ancient ruins – it also comes complete with a soaring Wagnerian music system.



Use the glowing crystals on Brinks' body. Use the museum tram. Click on the weakened door, get the canister and then go outside. Look at the fossil. Go to the water; Brinks will now run off.

Click on the loose bones and arrange them to look like the fossil (you can use the right-hand mouse button to rotate them). Now use the canister with the dead creature, followed by the glowing crystals. Once the monster is dead, enter the water. Go into the chamber and get the plate. Get the orange engraved rod. Take the tram back to Nexus.

### Planetarium spire

Open the door located to the right of the dark passage using the orange rod code. Now use the tram call to go to the planetarium spire.

Go outside, then upwards. Time your next move so that the water will carry you to the far side. Use the shovel with the boulder.

Make the light bridge (click the lens twice). Click on the plateau. Use the shovel on the cave closest to the clearing. Get the dowel, cover and ribcage. Use the dowel with the hole in the wood frame circle. Get the pole and use it with the dowel. Use the ribcage with the hook. Get the rod and use it with

the cage. Now you've got to catch the critter – you can achieve this by clicking on the holes, which will make it move between the wheels. You can now cross over to the left of the screen by walking along the front of it. Now return right, behind the creature, to make it run forward into the trap. Use the bracelet with the critter and then click on the trap to free it. Retrieve the rod and the ribcage. Enter the cave and stand next to the bowl. Use the device. Use the shovel with the tracker spot. Now get the machine part. Leave the cave and go to the clearing, then go across the waterfall bridge to the crevice and get the blue rod. Return to Nexus.

### Nexus

Enter the dark tunnel and watch the video clip. Go left. Click on the button and enter the airlock. Push the button twice. Go through the door and click on the glowing panel. One of the crystals is black – click on it. Use the blue rod with the hole, then click on the black crystal again. Click and drag on each sliding crystal until the original black one is as white as the others. (There's a certain point when dragging each of the sliding crystals when the black crystal is brightest.) Return to Nexus. »





(Right) Help! The world is in peril – a gigantic asteroid is heading this way and only a cast of heroes from what looks like an American cartoon can save us (so where's Scooby Doo?).

(Far right) In the depths of a dark crypt stands a pyramid which contains the body of the long dead creator. Does he hold the secret of this alien world? You bet your life he does!



Go to the plateau. Use the shovel with the stone plate. Enter the hole to the tomb. Use the blue crystal with the hole. Move to the bottom of the screen, stopping on the two markings. Use the rod with the loose stone, then leave the tomb. Click on the dirt. Click on the path. Create the light bridge and use it to go to the critter area. Go to the plateau. Use the machine part, followed by the cover, with the panel. Now click on the panel, then go through the door. Get the green rod, plate and twin sceptres.

Use the gold sceptre with the faint light; now use the gold sceptre to move the planet to the two o'clock position.

Use the silver sceptre to move the small moon to a seven o'clock position

around the planet – the aim is to form a straight line from the planet through the small moon to the large moon. Push the button to open the door, and once again return to Nexus.

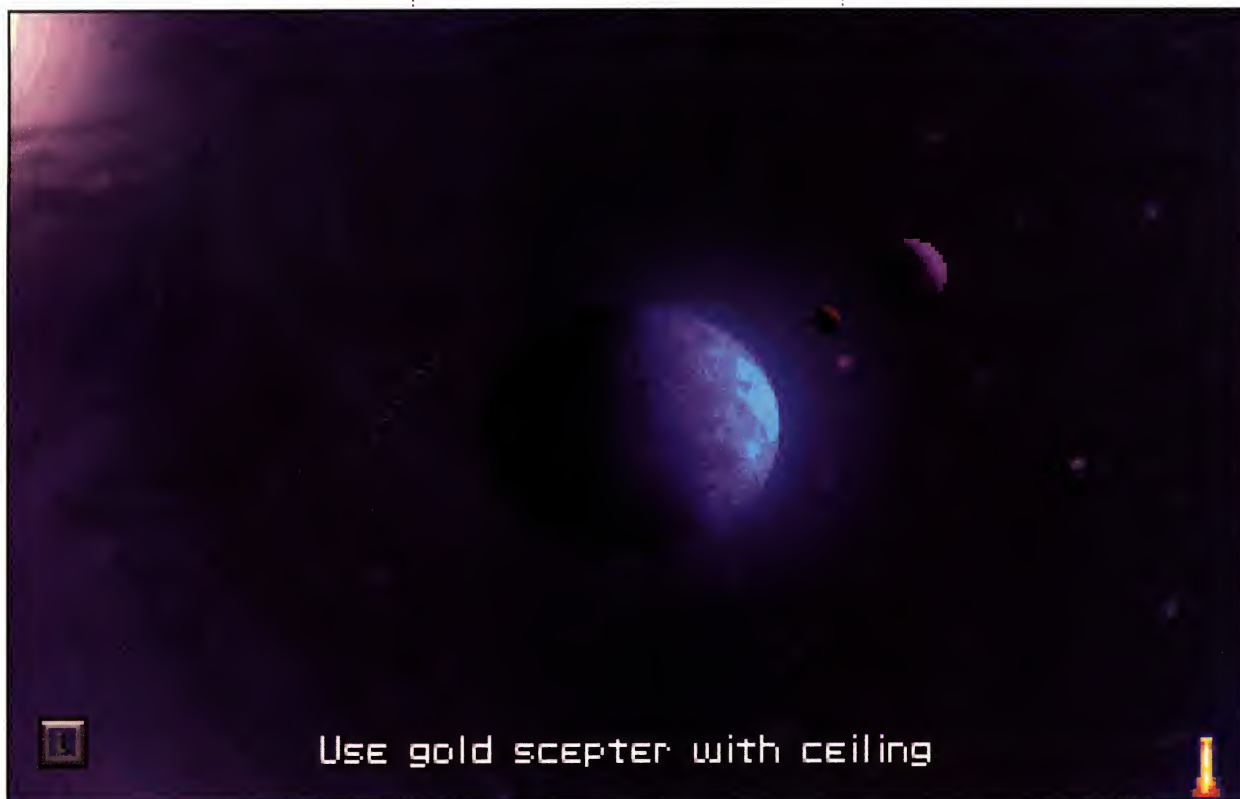
Open the door next to the sparking cable using the green rod code. Enter the open door and push the tram call. Go to the map spire. Enter the opening at the top of the screen. Click on the strange field. Exit. Enter the cavern. Enter the pit to reach the map room. Click on the panel and use the red rod combination. Watch the scene of the hidden room. Exit. Leave the map room through the opening. Attempt to make the light bridge work, although it's broken. Open the panel, and click on it.

Trial and error will eventually switch the light to the prism between the red and the blue – you will get a message when it's correct. You will also have to adjust the lens a few times before the light bridge will finally form. Use the light bridge to go to the tomb.

### The tomb

Click on the statue, then click twice on the crypt to ride it down to the cavern below. Go left and click on the door. Use the glowing crystals on the broken bones to create a second dog. Use the yellow engraved rod with the slot. Enter the door. Click on the pyramid. Use the yellow engraved rod on the panel. Use the glowing crystals on the dead alien

(Right) This is the map of the heavens that you must recreate with the power of the twin sceptres. Set up an eclipse as shown to open the way to an alien's tomb.







and try to talk to it. Exit the tomb. Click on the path. Move to the cave interior and then the plateau. Talk to Brinks. Go to the cavern and use the flashlight on the bat creatures in there. Return to the platform and quickly get the crystals before Brinks returns.

Go to the monster's nest, via the map room and pit, and then go to the left of the door. Now walk right to the grate and talk to Brinks. After he has distracted the monster, go through the right door. Move to the top of the waterfall and push the rock to block the stream. Return to the nest. Talk firstly to Brinks about the grate, and then to Maggie.

Go to the beach near the map spire tram and look at the strange field.

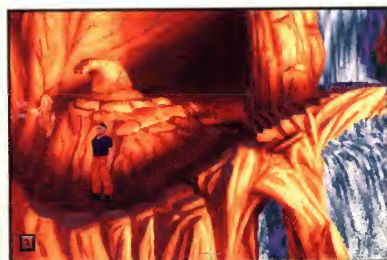
Use the tablet with Maggie. Enter the island opening. Now get the plate and go directly to the cavern.

Receive a message from Brinks.

Go to the planetarium spire, then to the crevice, and use the jaw bone on Brink. You will now be automatically returned to the Nexus.

## Nexus again

Use the plates on the alcove. Enter the door and use the tram call. Enter the door and look at the console. Look at the gap. Exit console view. Walk up the ramp to the top of the screen. Look at the controls and the alien device. Go outside, upwards. Talk to Maggie about the alien device. Go left and click on the nest. Make the light bridge work. Return to the alien's pyramid and talk to the dead alien again. (If you need a glowing crystal make sure you pick one up beforehand.) Talk about everything until each icon 'greys' out. Get the



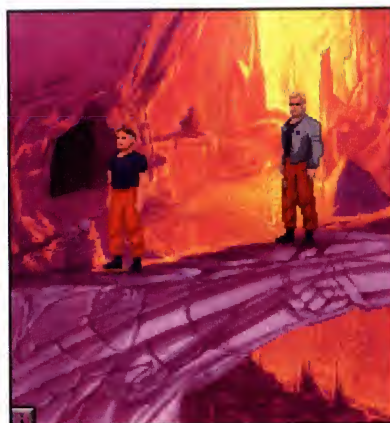
creature's engraving. Go to the map room. Use the creator's engraving with the panel (like the rods). Go to the beach near the waterfall (near the nest).

Get the eye part. Go to the cathedral spire, then to the machine room (the one with the console). Go to the tomb spire. Go to the platform where Brinks is, and use the eye part first on Brinks, then with the slot in the relic. Retrieve the eye part. Use the eye part with the slot in the relic again. Get the eye part and the crystals. Go to the cathedral spire. Click on the console. Use the glowing crystals with the empty slots. Use the eye part with the gap.

Talk to Maggie – but be prepared to shed a few tears because this is the last conversation you'll have with her, as at this moment she will be killed.

Go to the light bridge and attempt to use it. Kill the beast by turning the light bridge off. Now turn it back on and use it. Click on the eye, then the portal.

That's it! Now you can sit back and watch the sugary ending! **Z**

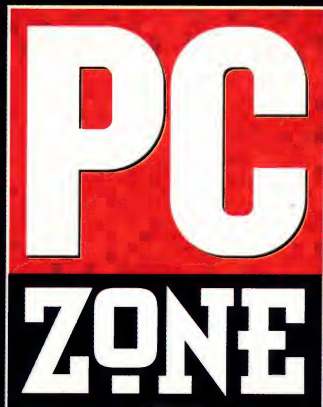


(Above) This is what the fossil created from the bones of the turtle creature should look like when completed.

(Above left) To reveal the way to the crypt all you need to do is touch the golden statue of the ancient alien.







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# BUYERS' GUIDE

Welcome to the all-singing, all-dancing **PC Zone Buyers Guide**, which is to gaming what the BR timetable is to trainspotters. You name it, it's here – painstakingly compiled by our very own engine driver.

## Issue 10 – January 1994

### 8 Ball Deluxe

(75) Supervision – Pinball Game £34.99

Technically, the best pinball game there is, but there's not enough of it for the price.

### 20th Century Almanac

(30) The Software Business – General Interest £74.99  
Outrageous price for a poor substitute for a hardback encyclopaedia.

### Aces Over Europe

(78) Dynamix – Flight Sim £44.99

It's better than *Aces Of The Pacific*, but so it should be. Dated, but still very playable.

### Air Combat Classics

(60) US Gold – Flight Sim £45.99

Shows just how far things have progressed in five years.

### Allen Breed

(75) Team 17 – Shoot 'Em Up £29.99

Enjoyable, undemanding shoot 'em up that comes into its own in two-player mode.

### Dracula Unleashed

(85: Recommended) Mindscape – Adventure £39.99  
Classic adventure that you can really get your teeth into.

### Dreamlands

(72) Daze Marketing – Compendium £29.99

The ideas and graphics are interesting; the gameplay, however, isn't.

### Goblins 2

(67) Coktel Vision – Puzzle Game £44.99

Zany puzzle game, frustrating at times but mostly good fun.

### IndyCar Racing

(93: Classic) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Driving £44.99

The new definitive driving game. And it comes with a free moustache.

### Innocent Until Caught

(84: Recommended) Psygnosis – Adventure £44.99

Well worth nicking. Ho ho.

### Jurassic Park

(73) Ocean – Adventure £34.99

Despite some irritating flaws, this is an atmospheric and addictive game.

### Knights Of The Sky

(79) Kixx – Strategy £16.99

A game that's well worth buying for the two-player option alone.

### Links Championship Course: Innisbrook

(75) US Gold – Sport £24.99

If you really want another *Links* course, then this is one.

### Links

(80: Recommended) Kixx – Sport £16.99

An excellent golf game for anyone with a less than ninja PC.

### Lords Of Power

(85: Recommended) Ubisoft – Strategy £39.99

A first class simulation which you would be mad not to buy.

### Network Q RAC Rally 2

(80: Recommended) Europress Software – Driving Game £34.99

A rather good addition to the current crop of driving games, if you can stand the opponent's amazing skills.

### Newsweek Interactive

(30) The Software Business – General Interest £39.99

Over-priced, over-patronising and over here.

### Night Shift

(70) Kixx – Puzzle Game £12.99

A suitably frantic and frustrating puzzler.

### Oceans Below

(70) The Software Business – Edutainment £39.99

Initially interesting, but the novelty all too soon wears off. Strictly for scuba diving fans.

### Protostar (CD)

(80: Recommended) Accolade – Space Sim £39.99

Absorbing, well designed and, if you can forgive its weaker moments, it'll keep you busy for ages.

### Return To Zork (CD)

(90: Classic) Activision – Adventure £49.99

Bad news for text-adventure purists who thought that Zork was sacred. Ha!

### Return To Zork

(90: Classic) Activision – Adventure £45.99

A highly imaginative and enjoyable adventure game with some very clever knobs attached.

### Shadowcaster

(66) Electronic Arts – Role-Playing Game £44.99

Neither *Wolfenstein* nor *Underworld*. And not much in-between.

### Speed Racer

(49) Accolade – Racing £39.99

Nice intro, shame about the game.

### Star Trek: Judgement Rites

(79) Interplay – Adventure £44.99

The stories are poetic and the variety of gameplay is 'fascinating' but it isn't the best flight sim or adventure game.

### Strike Squad

(25) Empire – Strategy £39.99

One look at the poor score should be enough to tell you what we think. Just turn the page and get on with enjoying life, okay?

### The Blue And The Gray

(78) Impressions – Wargame £39.99

Dedicated blood 'n' guts fans will find it a little simplistic, but it's a great all-round wargame with hidden depths and longterm playability.

### The Even More Incredible Machine

(89: Recommended) Dynamix – Puzzle Game £39.99

If you've never played *The Incredible Machine* now's the time to start. So come on then, what are you waiting for?

### World Class Rugby

(60) Audiogenic – Sport £14.99

Not really worth the waggle.

### World War Two: Battles Of The South Pacific

(62) Mirage – Strategy/Action £44.99

An innovative mix of naval strategy and action, though unfortunately the gameplay doesn't quite live up to expectations.

## Issue 11 – February 1994

### Advantage Tennis

(55) Infogrames – Sport £35.99

Unexciting tennis game that lacks punch.

### Alone In The Dark 2

(97: Classic) Infogrames – Adventure £39.99

Absolutely brilliant! What the PC was made for.

### Alone In The Dark (CD)

(92: Classic) Infogrames – Adventure £44.99

Still the best thing since sliced bread. Buy it.

### B-Wing

(72) US Gold – Space Sim £19.99

Your sister either fancied Han Solo or Luke Skywalker. You'll either fancy *B-Wing* or, er, something else.

### Capitol Hill (CD)

(75) Software Toolworks – Edutainment £39.99

Comprehensive introduction to American politics.

### Chessmaster 4000 Turbo

(90: Classic) Mindscape – Chess £34.99

Tough opponent: gentle teacher.

### Critical Path (CD)

(72) Media Vision – Adventure £49.99

Slick and atmospheric but way too short.

### Dungeon Hack

(62) SSI – Role-Playing Game £39.99

Not enough there. Not enough design options. Not enough gameplay. For very hardened and grizzled role-players only.

### Fire And Ice

(75) Renegade – Platform Game £29.99

A fun but difficult game, marred only by an over-inflated price and ridiculous copy protection.

### Flight Sim Toolkit

(80: Recommended) Domark – Simulation £49.99

Recommended, but only if you find *Stunt Island* limiting. It can be very heavy going.

### Global Domination

(65) Impressions – Strategy £39.99

Slick, addictive strategy game but it presents no long term challenge.

### Goblins 3

(75) Coktel Vision – Puzzle Game £39.99

Good for beginners and a pleasant diversion for seasoned adventurers.

### Kingmaker

(88: Recommended) US Gold – Board Game £37.99

Without doubt the best board game conversion for a long, long time.

### Magic Boy

(60) Empire – Platform Game £25.99

Not very 'magic' at all.

### Master Of Orion

(72) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99

A good one for all the accountants out there.

### Rebel Assault

(93: Classic) LucasArts – Shoot 'Em Up £49.99

It's *Star Wars*. It's also the most important game to date.

### Striker

(55) Elite – Sport £29.99

Another Paul Bodin penalty of the gamesplaying world.

### Subwar 2060

(88: Recommended) MicroProse – Simulation £44.99

Easily the best 'fun' simulation that MicroProse has produced.

### The Labyrinth Of Time

(89: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Adventure £39.99

Beautiful, alluring, a touch slow and a little fussy. A quite superb adventure though.

### The Terminator Rampage

(92) Bethesda Softworks – Arcade £39.99

Okay, but once you've seen *Doom*, you'll laugh in *Rampage*'s face and spill its pint.

### VGA Planets

(70) PAW PBM – Role-Playing Game £24.99

A rather interesting type of RPG that takes some time, but is generally worth the wait.

## Issue 12 – March 1994

### Campaign

(52) Empire – Strategy £39.99

Dim-witted attempt at simulating armoured action – too buggy to recommend, despite colourful graphics and arcade sequences.

### Championship Manager '94

(80: Recommended) Domark – Sport £29.99

It's still the best (just).

### Championship Manager Italia

(80: Recommended) Domark – Sport £29.99

It's the best too, just with a few more noughts at the end of the transfer figures.

### Combat Classics 2

(50) Empire – Flight Sim Compendium £34.99

Sadly, this compilation contains one classic and two rather second-rate duds.

### Companions Of Xanth

(73) Accolade – Adventure £39.99

Awful puns. Questionable humour. Very *Monkey Island*-esque. What more could you want from an adventure?

### Cyber Race

(64) Cyberdreams – Racing £44.99

Mildly entertaining for a quick blast, but that's about it.

### Fury Of The Furries

(85: Recommended) Mindscape – Puzzle/Platform Game £39.99

A riveting platform puzzler, but not for the easily frustrated.

### Gabriel Knight

(92: Classic) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £39.99

Brilliant and frightening offering from Sierra.

### Genesis

(83: Recommended) Mindscape – Strategy £34.99

A little bit of *Populous*, a little bit of *Civilization*.

### Hand Of Fate

(82: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £39.99

You've got to hand it to Westwood, this is a bit of a stunner.

### Heirs To The Throne

(43) Mirage – Strategy £44.99

If I got this kind of quality from a PD game I'd be blinking well complain.

### Indianapolis 500

(65) Hit Squad – Driving £14.99

A once-great giant succumbs to the ravages of time.

### Leisure Suit Larry 6

(75) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £35.99

The best *Larry* yet; but he's getting way past his sell-by date.

### Lilli Divil

(90: Classic) Gremlin Graphics – Puzzle Game £39.99

An excellent puzzle game with wit and flair.

### Police Quest 4: Open Season

(78) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £39.99

A thoroughly professional job for those who can think and click at the same time.

### Premier Challenge

(78) Tai Chi – Sport £24.99

Design your own game. Boost this score.

### Premier Manager 2

(65) Gremlin Graphics – Sport £34.99

It's better, but still too obsessed with interior decorating for my liking.

### Shadow Of Darkness

(80: Recommended) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £39.99

A compelling storyline, but the battle scenes are dull.

### The Incredible Toons

(82: Recommended) Dynamix – Puzzle Game £39.99

Zany, silly and highly addictive.

## Issue 13 – April 1994

### Archon Ultra

(78) US Gold – Strategy £39.99

More beat 'em up than strategy.

### Beneath A Steel Sky

(83: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Flight Sim £39.99

Graphically good and pleasingly puzzling jaunt that you'll feel like returning to.

### Conspiracy

(67) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £44.99

Takes all the fun out of Ruskie bashing.

### D-Day

(38) US Gold – Wargame £35.99

*D-Day* lies bleeding in the no man's land of wargames.

### Daemongate

(45) Gametek – Role-Playing Game £29.99

Out-dated, tedious and visually vestigial.

### Doom

(96: Classic) ID Software – Arcade £34.99

The best arcade game and also the best multi-player game ever. *Doom* is the best. Need we say more?

### Hired Guns

(77) Psygnosis – Role-Playing Game £44.99

*Ishar 2* with robots.

### Hot Sound And Vision

(85: Recommended) Interplay – General Interest £44.99

An outstanding collection.

### Interplay's 10 Year Anthology

(85: Recommended) Interplay – Compendium £49.99

A cost-effective way to build an instant library of classic games.

### Micro Machines

(70) Codemasters – Arcade £29.99

A good two-player game (if you have a decent PC, that is).





(Left) *X-Wing*: groove on down to the old 'destroy the Death Star, save the croissant-haired princess' tune.

#### Mortal Kombat

(80: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Beat 'Em Up £29.99  
Not as good as the SNES *Street Fighter II*, but the best on the PC.

#### Nomad

(78) Gametek – Space Strategy £29.99  
Good game if you're more into exploring than fighting.

#### Pinball Fantasies

(80: Recommended) 21st Century Entertainment – Pinball Game £37.95

The meanest machine of them all and a worthy successor to the original *Pinball Dreams*.

#### Reunion

(80: Recommended) Grandslam – Strategy £TBA  
*Reunion* has something for everyone.

#### Sim City 2000

(92: Classic) Maxis – Strategy £39.99  
Brilliant game that'll make you anally retentive in the extreme.

#### Star Trek: 25th Anniversary

(86: Recommended) Interplay – Adventure Game £49.99

A game boldly going where it's been before, just a little more vocally.

#### Strike Commander (CD)

(86: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £49.99

Superior flight sim, but you need the hardware to match.

#### The Complete UMS

(58) Mirage – Strategy £44.99

Both classics in their day, the two *UMS* games are a bit too long in the tooth to excite anyone but the real enthusiast.

#### The Lawnmower Man

(77) Sales Curve Interactive – Arcade £54.99  
Excellent presented, just a little more complexity in the gameplay and it would have been unreservedly recommended.

#### Winter Olympics

(64) US Gold – Sport £42.99

Has its moments, but you'll probably play it for a few hours and thereafter pick it up once a year if you get really bored.

#### Wizard

(73) Psygnosis – Role-Playing Game £44.99

A good stepping stone into the land of RPGs.

#### Issue 14 – May 1994

##### Air Transport Pilot (CD)

(70) RC Simulations – Simulation £79.95  
Well, it's not really our idea of fun, but it's a reasonable effort for a simulation of this type.

##### Airlines

(20) Kompart (UK) Ltd – Strategy £39.99  
Ugly, fiddly and totally boring.

##### Arena: The Elder Scrolls

(62) Bethesda Softworks – Role-Playing Game £45.99

Disappointing really.

##### Award Winner Gold Edition

(86: Recommended) Empire – Arcade £34.99  
Superb quality games with unrivalled value for money. Buy it now!

##### Battle Isle 2

(91: Classic) Blue Byte – Strategy £54.99  
Without a shadow of a doubt, this is the strategy game of the year.

##### Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space (CD)

(95: Classic) Interplay – Strategy £39.99  
A stunning improvement on an already classic game.

##### Cannon Fodder

(90: Classic) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Arcade/Strategy £34.99  
Great fun for all the wrong and right reasons.

##### CD-ROM Challenge Pack

(75) Software Toolworks – Compendium £39.99  
Reasonably good compilation, but there are better ones around.

##### Championship Manager For Windows

(79) Domark – Sport £29.99  
A wasted opportunity. Not as good as the DOS version.

##### D/Generation

(85: Recommended) Mindscape – Adventure £19.99  
Probably the best game that Windows users have ever played.

#### Excellent Games

(85: Recommended) Beau Jolly – Various £39.99  
Great games at a great price. A compilation not to be missed, including *Populous 2*, *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*, *Car And Driver* and *Robocod*.

#### Fantastic Dizzy

(50) Codemasters – Platform Game £9.99  
What can we say? Wrong time. Wrong format. Wrong price.

#### Gabriel Knight (CD)

(90: Classic) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £44.99  
Brooding, atmospheric thriller.

#### In Extremis

(67) US Gold – Arcade £37.99  
You'll shriek! You'll shout! You'll yawn!

#### Johnny Quest

(12) Software Business – Arcade/Adventure £29.99  
Can basically be summed up in one word – dreadful.

#### Megarace

(65) Mindscape – Racing £39.99

A superb demonstration of what can be done graphically with CD-ROM... and how easy it is for gameplay to suffer as a result.

#### Merchant Prince

(82: Recommended) Mirage – Strategy £44.99

Don't let the dodgy graphics fool you. If you give this game half a chance, we reckon you'll be hooked.

#### Microcosm

(70) Psygnosis – Shoot 'Em Up £49.99

Brilliant graphics and excellent sound. Let down by limited gameplay.

#### NFL Pro League Football

(50) Digital Integration – Sport £39.99

As a play-editor it's okay, but playing the game itself is disappointing.

#### Privateer: Righteous Fire

(80: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Add-On £19.99

*Privateer* fans definitely won't be disappointed with this one.

#### Seawolf

(83: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Simulation £44.99

A highly atmospheric sub sim with a control interface from hell.

#### Starford

(70) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99

It could have been excellent. Could have been. Damn!

#### The Patrician (CD)

(70) Daze Marketing – Strategy £39.99

A good game on disk, slightly better on CD.

#### The Red Crystal

(43) Mirage – Role-Playing Game £44.99

Don't ask your friends to play this if you want to keep them.

#### Unnecessary Roughness

(66) Accolade – Sport £39.99

Best described as 'all right'. It's as good as most American footy sims.

#### Issue 15 – June 1994

##### Bloodnet

(75) MicroProse – Role-Playing Game £39.99

Hindered by outdated implementation, but still well worth a look.

##### Carriers At War II

(63) Electronic Arts – Strategy £44.99

For die-hard strategy aficionados.

##### Darkseed

(90: Classic) Cyberdreams – Adventure £44.99

If you have a taste for the macabre, you'll never forget the *Darkseed* affair.

##### Diggers

(40) Millennium – Puzzle Game £34.99

Mind-numbingly tedious.

##### Disney Animation Studio

(75) Infogrames – General Interest £99.99

More serious approach with superb sample animations that you can't use!

##### Dragonsphere

(69) MicroProse – Adventure £39.99

A beautiful adventure game that won't tax your brain too heavily.

##### Evasive Action

(40) Mindscape – Simulation £34.99

Oh, so very close, but it's got more bugs than Watergate.

#### F1

(40) Domark – Sport £29.99

The champions of sport produce yet another world-beater.

#### Fleet Defender

(86: Recommended) MicroProse – Flight Simulation £44.99

Heavyweight flight sim, both helped and hindered by over-clever graphics.

#### Hanna-Barbera Animation Workshop

(75) Empire – General Interest £49.99

Tries to make everything fun and encourages you to try out other methods of animation.

#### Hornet Naval Strike Fighter

(80: Recommended) Spectrum Holobyte – Flight Simulation

As that well known saying goes: 'If you like *Falcon 3*, you'll just love *Hornet*.'

#### Myst

(67) Electronic Arts – Adventure £44.99

Surreal and atmospheric, if not realistic.

#### Pacific Strike

(80: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £49.99

Miles better than *Strike Commander* but requires a state-of-the-art ninja PC.

#### Pagan: Ultima VII

(78) Electronic Arts – Role-Playing Game £44.99

Without doubt a love/hate relationship for *Ultima* purists.

#### Ravenloft

(78) US Gold – Role-Playing Game £45.99

SSI has finally got 'real' and produced a playable and accessible RPG.

#### Red Hell

(60) Cyberdreams – Adventure £39.99

The graphics are poor and the control system is dire. Avoid it.

#### RedShift

(95: Classic) Maris Multimedia Ltd – General Interest £89.00

Stunning program which will be hard to beat.

#### Sabre Team

(60) Krisalis – Strategy £29.99

This has all been done before, and done much better as well.

#### Shadowcaster

(70) Electronic Arts – Role-Playing Game £39.99

Considerable enhancements for CD but the gameplay remains the same.

#### Spaceship Warlock

(70) Reactor/Ubisoft – Adventure £44.99

Very slick, very polished. The gameplay's a bit limited but it's fun all the same.

#### TFX

(80: Recommended) Ocean – Simulation £44.99

Great game with totally superfluous bells and whistles.

#### UFO Enemy Unknown

(93: Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99

Brilliantly designed, perfectly implemented and totally absorbing.

#### Washington DC Scenery

(85: Recommended) Supervision – Flight Sim Add-On £39.99

One of the best flight sim add-ons to date.

#### Issue 16 – July 1994

##### Castles II

(65) Interplay – Strategy £49.95

Interplay usually releases excellent games – this isn't one of them.

##### Comanche (CD)

(90: Classic) Optima – Flight Sim £49.99

Brilliant action-packed helicopter simulation at a great price on CD.

##### Companions Of Xanth (CD)

(84: Recommended) Accolade – Role-Playing Game £39.99

Great game on disk. Even better on CD.

##### Corridor 7

(55) Gametek – Arcade £19.99

Nothing new or exciting.

##### Detroit

(85: Recommended) Impressions – Strategy £39.99

An intriguing strategy/sim which boasts both originality and playability.

##### Dragon's Lair

(67) Elite Systems – Adventure £39.99

An interactive cartoon that's more 'cartoon' than 'interactive'.

#### Eye Of The Storm

(40) Rebellion – Space/Strategy £39.99

Very futuristic, very *Elite* and very, very crap.

#### Great Naval Battles 2

(86: Recommended) US Gold – Simulation £45.99

SSI cruises easily to the head of the fleet with this simply stunning sim.

#### Hand Of Fate (CD)

(78) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £49.99

Good game, shame about the conversion. In this case, more equals less.

#### Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition

(85: Recommended) Accolade – Sport £19.99

A good golf game at an amazing price.

#### Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker

(80: Recommended) Hit Squad – Sport £14.99

Dangerously addictive snooker sim.

#### Lucky's Casino Adventure

(60) Mirage – Card Game £44.99

Challenging, fun, totally addictive but a bit pricey.

#### Lure Of The Tempress

(55) Hit Squad – Adventure £14.99

Old and fading.

#### Power Game 2 (CD)

(70) Activision – Simulation £29.99

Worth looking at if you don't have the hardware to run the latest sim.

#### Robinson's Requiem

(85: Recommended) Daze Marketing – RPG £39.99

This is a highly original and addictive 'survival sim' which, unfortunately, has some annoying bits.

#### Sam And Max Hit The Road

(93: Classic) US Gold – Adventure £45.99

Brilliantly original, a highly humorous jaunt.

#### Sim City Classic

(70) Hit Squad – Strategy £16.99

Still a great game but check out *Sim City 2000* first.

#### Sim City Enhanced

(82: Recommended) Interplay – Strategy £49.99

*Sim City*'s an excellent game but so quid is a bit steep for a few enhancements.

#### Sleepwalker

(45) Hit Squad – Platform Game £9.99

Third-rate platformer. Stay well away from it.

#### Space Hulk

(87: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Strategy £39.99

Still a tremendous game, but not as good as the disk-based version.

#### Summer Challenge & Winter Challenge

(80: Recommended) Accolade – Sport £19.99

Good compilation, great value.

#### The Horde

(87: Recommended) US Gold – Strategy/Arcade £44.99

Not an original concept but extremely well implemented.

#### The Rock 'n' Roll Years – The '50s

(70) Supervision – General Interest £24.99

Handy for 50's music lovers or as a reference – but we doubt if it'll get you rockin' round the clock.

#### The Settlers

(89: Recommended) Blue Byte – Strategy £39.99

A damn fine, engrossing game.

#### Theatre Of War

(70) Hit Squad – Strategy £12.99

Excellent strategy game and it looks cool, too.

#### UFO

(93: Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99

Our Chris's favourite, this is an incredibly addictive strategy game.

#### Wembley Rugby League

(66) Audiogenic – Sport £29.99

This manages to be quite an improvement on previous rugby games.

#### Wolfpack

(60) Optima – Strategy £29.99

Disappointingly average.





(Left) *Simon The Sorcerer*: at last, an adventure game with a sense of humour – albeit a bit Pratchett-esque.

**AI Quadim: The Genie's Curse**  
(40) US Gold/SSI – Role-Playing Game £35.99  
The thinking amoeba's beat 'em up.

**Burntime**  
(43) Max Design – Strategy £39.99  
Hey, it's just like being there.

**Cool Spot**  
(80: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Platform Game £29.99  
Charm and accessibility save it from being strictly seventies-up!

**Delta V**  
(64) Bethesda Softworks – Shoot 'Em Up £45.99  
Very fast and pretty stunning to look at, but it won't keep you up into the night.

**Dinosaur Detective Agency**  
(42) Alternative Software – Platform Game £16.99  
Cheap – but that's no reason to be cheerful.

**Empire Soccer**  
(57) Empire – Sport £29.99  
Let down by small viewing area, unintelligent player reactions and poor scrolling.

**Good To Firm**  
(50) New Era Software – Sport £29.99  
Horse-racing fanatics might get something out of it, but the experience will pall.

**International Tennis Open**  
(88: Recommended) Philips Interactive Media – Sport £44.99  
Definitely the new number one seed in the field of PC tennis simulations.

**Jack Nicklaus (CD)**  
(78) Accolade – Sport £16.99  
A perfectly serviceable golf game with a good course editor tacked on. Wait for me while I put my golfing shoes on...

**Newsweek 3 Globocop (CD)**  
(0) Mindscape – General Interest £39.99  
The most expensive beer mat in the world.

**Overlord**  
(85: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Simulation £39.99  
An old idea made new with some interesting tweaks.

**Pinball Dreams 2**  
(70) 21st Century Entertainment – Pinball £19.99  
Not bad at all. There's plenty for pinball wizards to get their flippers into.

**Shanghai II: Dragon's Eye**  
(88: Recommended) Activision – Puzzle Game £29.99  
Puzzles galore in this excellent addition to the rather mediocre range of games currently available for Windows.

**Sherlock Holmes – The Case Of The Serrated Scalpel**  
(48) Electronic Arts – Adventure £49.99  
Elementary, my dear Watson... and that's the problem.

**Simon The Sorcerer (CD)**  
(89: Recommended) Adventuresoft UK Ltd – Adventure £44.99  
A tricky adventure jaunt boosted by excellent talkie bits.

**Syndicate (CD)**  
(92: Classic) Electronic Arts – Strategy £39.99  
What a game. What a barg.

**Tactical Manager**  
(75) Black Legend – Sport £34.99  
An interesting little number with the odd weakness, but several nice ideas.

**Theme Park**  
(93: Classic) Electronic Arts – Strategy £44.99  
A highly inventive 'business' sim that's fun, fun, fun. Hip hip hoorah for Bullfrog!

**Walls Of Rome**  
(74) Digital Integration – Strategy £16.99  
Good, if thin, fun.

**World Cup USA '94**  
(78) US Gold – Sport £32.99  
Good features; difference of opinion over the gameplay.

**Zool 2**  
(82: Recommended) Millennium – Platform £34.99  
As they say, if you liked Zool, you'll love this.

**Issue 18 – September 1994**

**Beneath A Steel Sky (CD)**  
(72) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £39.99  
Comic book-style adventure with excellently funny dialogue but lacking any real depth.

**D-Day**  
(40) Impressions – Wargame £39.99  
A sluggish, unrealistic and bug-ridden attempt at a wargame without many redeeming features.

**FIFA International Soccer**  
(70) Electronic Arts – Sport £39.99  
Looks and sounds great, but lacks gameplay.

**Harpoon II**  
(70) Electronic Arts – Simulation £44.99  
Massive, embarrassingly serious sim. Superb detail, occasionally nail-biting, always sloooooow.

**Inherit The Earth – Quest For The Orb**  
(72) US Gold – Adventure £39.99  
A well-thought out gentle little brainteaser for those who fancy a 'sensible' game.

**International Sensible Soccer**  
(78) Renegade – Sport £19.99  
One of the best on the PC, but still not up to the Amiga version.

**Liul Divil (CD)**  
(88: Recommended) Gremlin Graphics – Adventure £34.99  
Excellent, original and addictive.

**Metal And Lace: The Battle Of The Robo Babes**  
(35) Megatech – Beat 'Em Up £39.99  
Totally devoid of any entertainment value whatsoever.

**On The Ball**  
(68) Ascon – Sport £34.99  
Too many frills, not enough body.

**Outpost**  
(84: Recommended) Sierra On-Line – Strategy £49.99  
A superb game. Addictive if you've got the hardware, hell if you haven't.

**Shadow Of The Comet (CD)**  
(88: Recommended) Infogrames – Adventure Game £39.99  
A worthwhile reworking of a great game, but still very idiosyncratic.

**Soccer Kid**  
(30) Krisalis – Platform Game £29.99  
If you want happening platform action, then buy something else.

**Theatre Of Death**  
(35) Psygnosis – Arcade/Strategy £34.99  
Below average imitation of an above-average game.

**TIE Fighter**  
(94: Classic) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Space Sim £49.99  
Sheer, undiluted quality. Go out and treat yourself to a copy.

## Issue 19 – October 1994

**74 Wargame Construction Set 2: Tanks!**  
(90: Classic) SSI – Wargame £39.99  
Never mind the 50-ton tanks – this is 50-tons of solid, fire-belching wargame. Absolutely brilliant.

**Battle Bugs**  
(65) Dynamix – Strategy £TBA  
A battle game with bugs in it (as opposed to a bugged battle game).

**Dark Legions**  
(85: Recommended) SSI – Strategy £35.99  
Wonderfully entertaining animations and game screens with hidden strategic depths.

**Helmdall 2**  
(45) Core – Adventure £39.99  
Great game, shame you can't play it.

**Hell Cab**  
(50) Time Warner – Adventure £49.99  
It's the same old story. Great graphics, but sadly lacking in gameplay.

**IndyCar Racing Expansion Pack**  
(94: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Driving £17.99  
These tracks are better than the original tracks (if you pretend Phoenix doesn't exist).

**Ishar III: The Seven Gates Of Infinity**  
(50) Simarils – Strategy £39.99  
Sum up *Ishar III* in one word? Avoid. Simple as that. The worst of a bunch.

**KGB**  
(65) Hit Squad – Adventure £14.99  
Bargain? Maybe. Boring? Definitely.

**Kick Off 3**  
(55) Anco – Sport £29.99  
Nice features, but gameplay isn't up to much.

**Manchester United Premier League Champions**  
(60) Krisalis – Sport £29.99  
Sensi revisited (although not as good) with a lot of features thrown in.

**Planet Football**  
(68) Infogrames – Sport £39.99  
The World Cup produced a rash of rush releases. This is not one of the best.

**Police Quest IV – Open Season**  
(80: Recommended) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £44.99  
Atmospheric and very entertaining. A bit of a let down at the end, though.

**Summer Challenge**  
(73) Hit Squad – Sport £12.99  
Not a bad game by sports sim standards and easy to cheat at, but do you really want another sport sim?

**Under A Killing Moon (CD)**  
(US Gold – Adventure £59.99  
Pigs can fly. Interactive movies do exist. Sort of.

**Wing Commander: Armada**  
(76) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £44.99  
Lots of good ideas stuck together but somehow it doesn't hang quite right.

## Issue 20 – November 1994

**Allen Legacy**  
(80: Recommended) Sierra On-Line – Strategy Game £39.99  
Space strategy thing which is a bit like *Outpost* without the pretty bits. Daunting at first, but ultimately very rewarding.

**Chaos Engine**  
(80: Recommended) Renegade – Arcade £32.99  
A damned good, multi-direction scrolling, shooty thing with lots of big guns and silly characters.

**Colonization**  
(90: Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99  
Try to imagine *Civilization* with more depth and better graphics. Well done... you've just imagined *Colonization*.

**Cyclemania (CD)**  
(83: Recommended) Accolade – Arcade Game £39.99  
Extremely competent *Road Rash* 3D0 rip-off with lovely digitised backdrops and big motorbikes.

**Desert Strike**  
(78) Gremlin – Arcade £34.99  
Conversion of the Mega Drive classic, isometric helicopter, blast 'em up game. The graphics are a bit crap but it's immensely playable.

**Doom II**  
(90: Classic) Virgin Interactive – Arcade Game £49.99  
The sequel to one of the best games ever. New graphics, a new gun and brand new monstie-wonsties. Miss it at your peril.

**Inferno (CD)**  
(88: Recommended) Ocean – Space/Sim £44.99  
Eagerly awaited game from DID. Lots of big space ships and silly looking aliens. One of the better space combat games.

**KA-50 Hokum**  
(85: Recommended) Virgin – Simulation £39.99  
Without a doubt the very best helicopter sim money can buy. Something for the propeller heads (yes, we know you're out there)...

**NHL Hockey 95 (CD)**  
(91: Classic) EA – Sports/Arcade £34.99  
A new version of the top-down scrolly, ice hockey game. Basically the same as the original (reviewed issue seven) but with new stats.

**PGA 486 (CD)**  
(91: Classic) Electronic Arts – Sports £44.99  
Gorgeous looking, solid playing, tasty little golf game. One of the best on the PC so far.

**Pinball Dreams CD**  
(70) 21st Century – Arcade £39.99  
Eight wonderfully designed, smoothly scrolling pinball tables. Why's it on CD? 'Cause there are lots of pointless rendered bits, that's why.

**System Shock**  
(95: Classic) EA/Origin – Role-Playing Game £44.99  
Pant-wettingly fantastic, cyberpunk, RPG thing. All hail *System Shock*, that shalt be king hereafter (at least until *System Shock II* comes out, that is).

## Issue 21 – December 1994

**Alone In The Dark 2 CD**  
(93: Classic) Infogrames – Adventure £44.99  
A sequel that is noticeably better than the original and comes with some serious CD enhancements. What a refreshing change.

**Dawn Patrol**  
(80: Recommended) Empire – Flight Sim £44.99  
A gorgeous looking SVGA WWI flight sim with a bit of a different idea behind it... it's an interactive book, apparently.

**Dreamweb**  
(74) Empire – Role-Playing Game £44.99  
Cyberpunk RPG with lots of violence and a shagging scene that has now become infamous.

**Ecstasica**  
(93: Classic) Psygnosis – Adventure £44.99  
An utterly brilliant *Alone in the Dark*-like with ellipsoid-generated characters and lots of pert buttocks.

**FIFA CD**  
(76) Electronic Arts – Sports £39.99  
A smart-looking footy game that just falls short of being an absolute belter.

**Little Big Adventure**  
(93: Classic) Electronic Arts – Adventure £44.99  
A truly amazing adventure with pretty graphics and weird French gameplay. Gobsmaacking.

**Magic Carpet**  
(96: Classic) Electronic Arts – Shoot 'Em Up £44.99  
Bloody excellent shoot 'em up – looks brilliant, totally addictive. A must-have.

**Project X**  
(76) Team 17 – Shoot 'Em Up £19.99  
A very competent and nicely low-priced little shoot 'em up.

**Rise Of The Robots**  
(88: Recommended) Mirage – Beat 'Em Up £44.99  
Possibly the best beat 'em up on the PC so far with some excellent rendered sprites.

**Space Simulator**  
(75) Microsoft – Simulator £39.99  
A huge simulation of man's quest for space that is just a little too ambitious for its own good.

**Star Crusader**  
(60) Gametek – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99  
Basically this is a poor man's *Wing Commander* with some nice CD bits.

**Transport Tycoon**  
(94: Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99  
One of the best strategy games around and a more than worthy sequel to *Railroad Tycoon*.

**Total Carnage**  
(74) ICE – Shoot 'Em Up £27.99  
Good challenging fun and a more than competent conversion of the original arcade machine.

## Issue 22 – January 1995

**Aces Of The Deep**  
(90: Classic) Dynamix/Sierra – Naval Sim £39.99  
Graphics, gameplay, sound and atmo combine to make this the best sub game available.

**All New World Of Lemmings**  
(78) Digital Integration – Puzzle Game £39.99  
If you like all the other *Lemmings* games, you'll like this one, too.

**Armored Fist (CD)**  
(86: Recommended) US Gold/Novalogic – Simulation £44.99  
*Comanche* on wheels. Er, tracks. You know what we mean.

**Creature Shock**  
(78) Virgin – Adventure Game £49.99  
An engrossing, atmospheric 3D adventure game. Great graphics, absorbing levels, but lousy soundtrack.

**Cyberwar**  
(55) SCI – Arcade Adventure £49.99  
It looks amazing. The gameplay isn't.

**Dark Sun II**  
(80: Recommended) Mindscape – RPG £44.99  
Love it for its brains, not for its looks.

**Discworld**  
(96: Classic) Psygnosis – Adventure Game £49.99  
*Discworld* is possibly the best point-and-click adventure game ever made.



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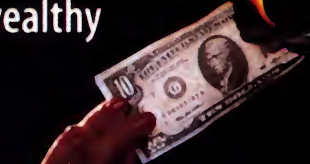
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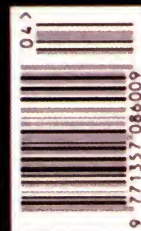
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tter (hint:  
out later)  
hit movie

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(Right) *IndyCar Racing*: great graphics and playability make this the best ever driving game.

(Far right) *Sam & Max*: The clue's inside the cat. Rip its head off! (Sick, or what?)



## Front Page Sports Baseball

(85: Recommended) Sierra – Sport £44.99  
It takes all the best bits from all the best games and ends up being the best.

## Kilk 'n' Play

(88: Recommended) Europress – Game Designer for Windows £39.99  
Neat intuitive, and loads of fun.

## Novastorm

(40) Psygnosis – Shoot 'Em Up £44.99  
Repeat ad nauseam: 'Pretty graphics doth not a game make.'

## Power Drive

(50) US Gold – Racing Game £39.99  
Knock off 30 whole points for no two-player mode. Sod off *Power Drive*.

## Quarantine

(80: Recommended) Gametek – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99  
An excellent blast and it looks good, too.

## Retribution

(45) Gremlin Interactive – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99  
Not only is it a below average shoot 'em up, it has pretensions too.

## US Navy Fighters

(90: Classic) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £44.99  
If it had a multi-player facility, we would've given it 100. But it hasn't, so we won't.

## Warcraft

(75) Interplay – Strategy £39.99  
Good, simple, addictive strategy game.

## Issue 23 – February 1995

### Alone In The Dark 3

(95: Classic) Infogrames – Adventure £44.99  
The mega-stonkingly weird and wonderful final chapter in the *Alone In The Dark* trilogy.

### Cannon Fodder 2

(74) Virgin Interactive – Arcade/Strategy £34.99  
Just more of the same, or is *Cannon Fodder 2* a significant improvement? Sensible returns with more 'fun with a gun'.

### Commander Blood

(81: Recommended) Mindscape – Adventure Game £44.99  
It's French, and guess what? It's weird. Very weird. We try not to get at them for it... but this is just plain mad.

### Cyberia

(80: Recommended) Interplay – Adventure/Shoot 'Em Up £49.99

A contender for the 'Best-looking game of 1994' award. Tastier than treacle pudding with lashings of thick custard, and almost certainly better than *Rebel Assault*.

### Dragon Lore

(81: Recommended) Mindscape – Adventure Game £44.99

Cryo's epic multi-CD graphic adventure finally arrives. Is it just more French weirdness or is it actually a decent game?

### Hammer Of The Gods

(77) US Gold – Strategy £TBA  
Nordic domination and general Euro-bashing in this simple but addictive strategy war sim from New World Computing.

### Kyrandia 3

(87: Recommended) Virgin – Adventure £44.99  
Westwood's *Fables and Fiends* series makes it to number three, and this time you get to play the bad guy!

### Lion King

(71) Virgin – Platform Game £29.99  
The smash-hit movie turns into a reasonable-ish platform game. *PC Zone* good tip number one (in a series of...) – just pretend your PC is a Mega Drive.

### NASCAR Racing

(84: Recommended) Virgin – Racing Sim £44.99  
Papyrus follows up *IndyCar* with the popular American sport of driving round and round in circles.

### Noctropolis

(79) Electronic Arts – Adventure £44.99  
For a change Electronic Arts goes all weird, gothic and horrific in this unusual super-hero adventure.

### Ultimate Body Blows

(78) Team 17 – Beat 'Em Up £29.99  
An Amiga conversion from Team 17. But don't be put off by that – it's actually quite good.

## Voyeur

(40) Interplay – Adventure £39.99  
Not as pervy as you might think. Yes, there are suspenders and brasieres in it, but don't buy it hoping for nudity or naughtiness 'cos you won't find any (er well, not much, at least not enough to satisfy the male staff on *PC Zone*).

## Wing Commander 3

(62) Electronic Arts – Flight Simulation £59.99  
Four million dollars, Luke Skywalker and a well-known porn actress – a potentially interesting situation, if ever there was one.

## Issue 24 – March 1995

### Aladdin

(70) Virgin – Arcade £29.99  
He leaps tall buildings, cuts through baddies with his scimitar and wears pointy slippers. He's Aladdin – who else?

### Dark Forces

(95: Classic) LucasArts/Virgin – Action Adventure £54.99

The empire is finally *Doom*-ed, but is it better than the real thing? We bring you the first review of the game everyone's itching to get their hands on, in a special world exclusive, courtesy of LucasArts and Virgin.

### Doom Clones: Head To Head

(55) Merit – Action Adventure £39.99  
We put Merit's *Dr Radiaki* up against Elite's *Virtuoso* and run for cover (well, *Doom*, actually).

### Hell: A Cyberpunk Thriller

(25) Gametek – Adventure £39.99  
It is: it isn't. If it's really this bad then start praying for forgiveness immediately.

### Kick Off 3: European Challenge

(70) Anco – Sport £29.99  
The last *Kick Off* was an absolute nightmare. Has Anco finally got it together in Europe?

### King's Quest VII

(93: Classic) Sierra – Adventure £44.99  
The latest point-and-click extravaganza from the Roberta Williams' school of mush-wushy, cutesy-wutesyness.

### Knights Of Xentar

(10) Megatech – Adventure £49.99  
A plentiful lack of beat 'em up action strides onto the PC, courtesy of Megatech. Ouch!

### Menzoberranzan

(68) Mindscape – Role-Playing Game £TBA  
Not a tasty lozenge that promises to clear your stuffy nose and soothe your sore throat, but a rather ordinary role-playing game.

### Metaltech: Earthsiege

(87: Recommended) Sierra – Simulation £39.99  
Go stomping mad in this spectacular *HERC*-fest. Just one thing though, why have extravagant *HERCS* that walk when the terrain is flat?

### Realms Of Arkania: Star Trail

(85: Recommended) US Gold – RPG £44.99  
The sequel to the keenly received *Blade Of Destiny* finally makes it onto CD-ROM. Hip, hip...!

### SuperKarts

(82: Recommended) Virgin – Action £TBA  
The most fun you can have with your bum an inch off the ground, when wearing a crash helmet and clad in brightly-coloured leather.

### TIE Fighter: Defender Of The Empire

(73) LucasArts – Space/Action £19.99  
Two new missions and a new ship. What ever will they think of next?

### Wings Of Glory

(78) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £TBA  
Chocks away as Origin reach for the skies to do battle with the Hun, dastardly chaps with 'taches and every other WWI flight sim ever created.

## Issue 25 – April 1995

### BC Racers

(62) Core Design – Racing Sim £34.99  
Best described as a kind of *Chuck Rock* meets *Super Mario Kart*. Unfortunately, the clash of these two mega-games hasn't proven to be that good. Oops.

### Big Red Adventure

(70) Core Design – Adventure £39.99  
This is the follow up to *Nippon Safes*... arrgh, keep it away! Hang on a minute, though, *Big Red Adventure* looks like it could be quite good.

## Bioforge

(95: Classic) Electronic Arts – Action Adventure £44.99

Is this the first 'real' interactive movie? Or is it just another game that looks like *Alone In The Dark*?

## Descent

(94: Classic) Interplay – 3D Shoot 'Em Up £44.99  
Could this be the game to finally knock *Doom* off the top spot? The fabulous 3D game from Interplay arrives at last.

## Heretic

(78) id/Raven – 3D Shoot 'Em Up £39.99  
'Doom-in-tights.' Can a fighting fantasy version of the greatest game of all time, ever, ever, really be better? Er, no.

## Iron Assault

(57) Virgin – 3D Shoot 'Em Up £34.99  
A distinctly average 'big robot' game joins the ranks of other distinctly average 'big robot' games on the PC.

## Legions

(65) Mindscape – Strategy Wargame £34.99  
This is definitely one for the Hex-heads, this is. It's intense, ludicrously strategic and it runs under Windows. Eek!

## Lost Eden

(76) Virgin – Adventure £34.99  
Cryo's dinosaur game finally arrives a year after it was unveiled. It's a bit like *Jurassic Park* meets *Dragon Lore*.

## Issue 26 – May 1995

### Atari Action Pack

(50) Activision – VCS Atari Compilation £24.99

This compilation includes lots of really ancient Activision Atari VCS games, all for Windows and all on one CD. So what's it like? Well, it's like a time machine that takes you somewhere a bit crap!

### Cyclones

(78) Mindscape – Adventure £44.99  
Yet another *Doom* clone – but not a bad one by any means – from the team that brought us both *Heretic* and *Shadowcaster*.

### Football Glory

(60) Kompart – Sports £TBA  
Q: When is *Sensible Soccer* not really *Sensible Soccer*?  
A: When it's a not-quite-so-good copy called *Football Glory*.

### Guilty

(58) Psygnosis – Adventure £39.99  
Sequel-ola. *Guilty* is the follow up to the awful *Innocent Until Caught*, and it's significantly better, but still not brilliant.

### Jungle Strike

(79) Gremlin – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99  
Another sequel... this time, the sequel to *Desert Strike*. But this shoot 'em up is bigger, more varied and harder than the original. Not bad at all.

### NBA Live

(90: Classic) Electronic Arts – Sport £44.99  
EA Sports awakens from a period of dormancy with this absolutely corking basketball arcade game – the best of its type around.

### Renegade

(75) SSI – Space Sim £44.99  
SSI's *TIE Fighter*/*Wing Commander* wannabe in glorious SVGA. A surprisingly playable space warfare game.

### Rise Of The Triad

(82: Classic) US Gold and PD Selections – Adventure £39.95  
Some love it and some hate it... but of the *Doom*-likes, this is one of the best.

### Super Frog

(40) Team 17 – Platform £19.99  
A platform game with a frog in it... Uh-huh. Okay.

### Tank Commander

(60) Domark – Simulation £39.99  
A budget-style tank game at full price. If you've got more money than sense, you'll really love it!

### Woodruff and the Schnibble of Azimuth

(75) Sierra – Adventure £39.99  
A weird adventure game from Sierra. A wonderfully deceptive adventure with comic-book feel!

## X-COM

(94 Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99  
The first *X-COM* was absolutely brilliant. This sequel is even better still.

## Issue 27 – June 1995

### Blind Date

(25) Domark – Adventure £39.99  
Chris had a jolly splendid time reviewing last month's 'interactive-try-to-get-laid-simulator'. What will the softies come up with next?

### Full Throttle

(92: Classic) LucasArts/Virgin – Adventure £49.99  
Hooray for LucasArts adventures. Big, tough guy biker stuff this time. Splendid.

### Flight Of The Amazon Queen

(50) Warner Interactive – Adventure £39.99  
This tries desperately to be a LucasArts adventure but fails quite miserably. Sorry, it's naff.

### Hardball 4

(83: Recommended) Accolade/Warner – Arcade/Sports £39.99  
Returning May's theme of 'sequels', Warner Interactive brings us the fourth *Hardball*. Surely Warner have to call it quits now?

### High Seas Trader

(62) Impressions – Strategy/Simulation £39.99  
Affectionately referred to as 'High Street Trader' in the *PC Zone* office, this is the latest strategy offering from Impressions.

### Magic Carpet: Hidden Worlds

(80: Recommended) Bullfrog – Arcade/Strategy £19.99

A sort of add-on thingy for *Magic Carpet* with lots of snow. The trouble is though, it's completely and utterly, stupidly, bloody hard.

### Pyrotechnica

(69) Psygnosis – 3D Shoot 'Em Up £29.99  
A very poor *Descent*-wannabe from Psygnosis. Fortunately though, it's considerably cheaper.

### Psycho Pinball

(78) Codemasters – Arcade £44.99  
Pinball from Codemasters. Some nice tables. Some nice music. Sorted.

### Slipstream 5000

(88: Recommended) Gremlin Interactive – Arcade/Shoot 'Em Up £39.99  
*Slipstream* is a three-dimensional-fabby-whizzo racing/shooting/speedy thing from Gremlin. Splendid stuff, and better than boring, run-of-the-mill racing games.

### Star Trek: TNG – "A Final Unity"

(94: Classic) MicroProse – Adventure £49.99  
Yes, it may have a ridiculously long title, but this is, without a doubt, the best game to bear the *Star Trek* name so far.

### Super Streetfighter II Turbo

(90: Classic) Gametek – Beat 'Em Up £39.99  
SSFI Turbo is one of the best arcade conversions ever seen on the PC.

### Ticonderoga

(78) Mindscape – Naval/Strategy £44.99  
Silly name but a damn fine naval strategy game. Lovely graphics and splendid CD bits.

### Virtua Chess

(85: Recommended) Titus – Strategy £44.99  
Snazzy 3D SVGA chess thingy from Titus, France. This one's different looking and with a ninja bastard brainbox.

### Warriors

(85: Recommended) Mindscape – Beat 'Em Up £39.99  
What, yet another beat 'em up? Anyone would think there's a shortage of 'em or something.

## Issue 28 – July 1995

### 1830

(68) US Gold – Board Game £39.99  
Set in the early years of American colonisation, a sort of *Railroad Tycoon* meets *Risk*. Strictly for those of trainspotter persuasion.

### Alex Dampier Pro Hockey

(66) Merit Software – Sports Sim £39.95  
Ice hockey sim with *FIFA*-style viewpoint, but impossible control system, and comes no where near *NHL Hockey '95*.

### Alien Breed: Tower Assault

(81) Team 17 – Shoot 'Em Up £29.99  
The sequel to *Alien Breed*, but superior to the PC version of the original. Great graphics and frenzied, addictive shooty action.





(Left) *Theme Park: Sim City* eat your heart out.

## « Brett Hull Hockey '95

(73) Accolade/Warner - Sports Simulation £39.99  
Top-down ice hockey game, which doesn't match the king of ice hockey sims, *NHL Hockey '95*, but betters *Alex Dampier Pro Hockey '95*.

### Chaos Control

(40) Philips/Infogrames - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99  
Unbelievably terrible futuristic FMV shoot 'em up that was passable on CD-i, but should never have seen the light of day on PC.

### Command & Conquer

(95) Classic) Virgin - Strategy Adventure £44.99  
*Dune 2* meets *Cannon Fodder* in this brilliant game of soldiers. It's without doubt one of the best of its genre around right now.

### Daedalus Encounter

(58) Virgin - Adventure £44.95  
Interactive movie game that fails to make the grade - and, for what it's worth, stars Tia Carrere, the babe from *Wayne's World*.

### Dominus

(42) US Gold - Strategy Game £39.99  
Fantasy battle game with good graphics and comprehensive interface but lacking that vital ingredient - gameplay.

### Frontier: First Encounters

(78) Gametek - Space Strategy Simulation £39.99  
Disappointing enhanced version of *Elite II*, which is also bugged to jiggery.

### Jagged Alliance

(72) Mindscape - Strategy Game £39.99  
Risk meets *Syndicate* in this strategy battle jaunt. It's not groundbreaking or particularly original but quite good fun all the same.

### Loadstar

(35) BMG Interactive - Shoot 'Em Up £34.99  
Dreadful FMV shoot 'em up not worth the paper its manual was printed on.

### Machiavelli The Prince

(89) MicroProse - Strategy Game £44.99  
Colonization-style sim packed with political intrigue, assassinations, plagues, pirates and a unique play by e-mail feature.

### Man Utd: The Double

(71) Krisalis - Sports Sim £29.99  
The best *Manchester United* game yet, but it's still not a patch on the excellent *Sensible Soccer* of this world.

### Sim Tower

(70) Maxis - Strategy Game £39.99  
Basically *Sim City* viewed from the side with the emphasis on tower blocks, but not as addictive - and the presentation is dire.

### Virtual Pool

(91) Classic) Interplay - Sports Sim £44.99  
Superb gameplay and 3D graphics, complete with a multi-player network option. This is about as close to a real game of pool as you can possibly get.

## Issue 29 - August 1995

### Civil War

(83: Recommended) Empire - Strategy Game £44.99  
The sequel to *Fields Of Glory*, and jolly nice it looks too.

### FX Fighters

(93: Classic) Philips/GTE - Beat 'Em Up £39.99  
The closest thing to *Virtua Fighter* on the PC, and by far the best beat 'em up you can buy. We love it!

### Hi-Octane

(83: Recommended) Bullfrog/Electronic Arts - Racing Game £39.99

Bullfrog surprises everyone by releasing a racing game, and surprises everyone even more by not saying anything about it until it's nearly finished. Hmm.

### Micro Machines 2

(92: Classic) Codemasters - Racing Game £44.99  
A brilliant, simple and effective racing game with a rather nifty little track designer thrown in for good measure.

### Orion Conspiracy

(36) Domark - Adventure Game £39.99  
Domark unveils what has to be the worst-scripted computer game ever conceived.

### Perfect General 2

(82: Recommended) Mirage Software - Strategy Wargame £44.99  
Hex-tastic strategy game for those of you who really like your wargames intense.

## Picture Perfect Golf

(30) Empire - Sports Sim £44.99

Pretty bloody naff. But hey, if you want to look at nice, digitised pictures of a golf course, this is well worth the dosh.

### Prisoner Of Ice

(88: Recommended) Infogrames - Adventure £44.99  
The second game in Infogrames' *Cthulhu* range, and what a stonker of a point-and-click adventure it is too.

### Scottish Open Golf

(60) Core Design - Sports Sim £39.99  
Core Design finally releases its 3D virtual golf thing. There are some okay bits and some pretty nob bits. Unfortunately, it's the nob bits that win through.

### Silverload

(7) Millennium/Psychosis - Adventure Game £39.99  
Millennium and Psychosis team up together and produce an adventure which is truly... quite awful.

### Striker 95

(62) Time Warner - Sports Sim £34.99

A football game that looks really fab and groovy, but doesn't quite cut it in the gameplay stakes.

### Ultimate Doom

(90: Classic) GT Interactive - Shoot 'Em Up £29.99  
The original *Doom* re-packaged with an extra episode. Is it another classic or just a colossal rip-off?

### Vortex

(80: Recommended) Warner Interactive - Interactive Movie £39.99

It's an interactive movie. No, it's a game. It's an interactive movie. No, it's a game. Arrrrghh!!!

## Issue 30 - September 1995

### Across the Rhine

(86: Recommended) MicroProse - Strategy Game £44.99

Well, if you're a propellor head you'll think it's the dog's gonads. If you're a bit of a thick, you'll still like it, once you work your way through the laborious manual, that is.

### Action Soccer

(50) Ubisoft - Football Sim £34.99

It had potential, but ultimately *Action Soccer* seems to have been relegated to the ranks of 'another crap footie game'.

### Air Power

(84: Recommended) Mindscape - Flight Sim £44.99  
Rowan teams up with Mindscape and chucks in all the best bits from its other flight sims, to make up a sort of fantasy strategy game, which is really pretty groovy.

### AIV Networks

(80: Recommended) Infogrames - Business Sim £44.99

A business sim for people who love trains. (Yee gods! What next?)

### Dungeon Master 2

(59) Interplay - Role Playing Game £44.99

It came out late and it wasn't worth the wait. Disappointingly out-dated and old-fashioned.

### Last Dynasty

(45) Sierra - Space Combat Sim £44.99

A good Windows-based adventure game, which is completely ruined by crap combat sections.

### Lords Of Midnight

(60) Domark - Adventure £44.99

Another very old game that's been given the sequel treatment - our reviewer said it was the biggest let-down since that leak in his inflatable Claire Rayner.

### Sim Town

(81: Recommended) Maxis - Simulation £29.99

Fun and educational in equal measures. But even better, you can make people say rude things when they're pissed off.

### Simon The Sorcerer 2

(84: Recommended) Adventure Soft (UK) - Adventure Game £44.99

Simon returns with DMs and long hair. Even though Chris Barrie hasn't done the voice this time, it's still a bloody good talkie adventure.

### Space Quest 6

(70) Sierra - Adventure Game £44.99

Trite adventure completely devoid of humour. *Space Quest* fans will love it!

## Terminal Velocity

(80: Recommended) US Gold - Shoot 'Em Up £44.99

A very good 3D engine, wearing a pair of rather unoriginal and unaddictive 'game-play trousers'.

### US Marine Fighters

(92: Classic) Electronic Arts - Flight Sim £19.99  
Absolutely brilliant. The only thing that prevented us giving *US Marine Fighters* 100 per cent was the lack of a network facility.

## Issue 31 - October 1995

### EF2000

(97: Classic) Ocean/DID - Flight Sim £49.99

Something for everyone. The best balance between simulator and game, ever.

### Fade To Black

(94: Classic) Electronic Arts - Arcade Adventure £44.99  
A corking follow up to *Flashback*, with lots of spinn-aroundy polygon bits, morphing monsties and big guns.

### The Need For Speed

(89: Recommended) Electronic Arts - Racing £44.99

There's no need to buy a 3D0 now this has made it to the PC! This sits somewhere between *Screamers* and the forthcoming *FIGP2*. We love the splendid crashes!

### Apache Longbow

(96: Classic) Digital Integration - Sim £39.99

The best helicopter sim around; although *Comanche* looks better, nothing comes close to matching the mixture of spot on handling, tactics, networking and atmosphere.

### Buried In Time

(77) US Gold - Interactive Movie £44.99

The sequel to *The Journeyman Project* is a tad too lengthy; technically it's great but it's lacking the elements of truly enjoyable gameplay.

### MechWarrior 2

(88: Recommended) Activision - Board Game £49.99  
Mayhem! Go on a stomping frenzy encased in a massive armour-plated robot body. Good, hard-hitting fun with plenty of missions and a good difficulty curve.

### Blown Away

(19) Instant Access - Interactive Movie £39.99

A pretty crap game of a pretty crap film.

### Cyberbykes

(10) Gametek - Shoot 'Em Up £24.99

It came, it saw, it sucked. Ideal as a present for someone you don't like.

### Lemmings 3D

(71) Psychosis - Puzzle Game £39.99

We've seen it all before; all that's new is that it's now from a different angle. Yawn.

### Player Manager 2

(45) Anco - Sport £34.99

Visually stunted, it's difficult to control the ball. What else? Oh, it's one to avoid.

### Championship Manager 2

(92: Classic) Domark - Sport £44.99 (TBC)

Every other football management game is just that - a game - but this one actually becomes 'real life'.

## Issue 32 - November 1995

### AI Unser Jr Racing

(60) Mindscape - Racing Game £29.99

It has all the features you'd expect from a racing game but ultimately it's fun for only a limited time.

### Ascendancy

(93: Classic) Virgin - Strategy £39.99

More than just another space-based strategy game, this has got all the best bits of every god/strategy/warfare game available. A word of warning though, get stuck into this and you can say goodbye to your social life.

### Battle Beast

(68) 7th Level - Beat 'Em Up £29.99

A cartoon beat 'em up with excellent animation, cut scenes and special effects - but that's it. Shame, 'cos it looks great, but as for gameplay - forget it.

### Burn:Cycle

(85: Recommended) Philips - Interactive Adventure £44.99

One of the best interactive adventures we've seen; good pacing, sharp plot and plenty of variety combine to make it outstanding.

## Crime Patrol & Gamegun

(70) American Laser Games/Mirage - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

It won't take you long to exhaust the fun factor of *Crime Patrol*, but the gun is compatible with some other games and as a bundled package it's really not bad value.

### Darker

(62) Psychosis - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

Mediocre 3D blast 'em up with nice smooth polygons and lots to shoot at, but apart from that not much more.

### Fatal Racing

(88: Recommended) Gremlin Interactive - Racing £7BC

*Ridge Racer* meets *Stunt Car Racer*... as long as you've got a Pentium, of course.

### Magic Carpet 2

(92: Classic) Electronic Arts - Shoot 'Em Up Game £44.99

It sent our reviewer into a frenzy! The classic game is now even better, with new monsters and a new graphical style which includes scary night-time bits - totally addictive.

### NHL Hockey 96

(90: Classic) Electronic Arts - Sport £44.99

This uses Electronic Art's new 'Virtual Stadium' technology (used to great effect in *FIFA Soccer* to make it look so flash). Definitely one of the nicest-looking sports games we've reviewed for ages.

### PGA Tour 96

(94: Classic) Electronic Arts - Sport £44.99

New and improved! Now includes two new Championship courses, you can play as or against 14 actual photo-realistic pros, there's a new picture-in-picture view... need we go on? The best golf game just got better.

### Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure

(70) Activision - Platform £44.99

Conversion of the ancient Atari vcs platform game; nothing particularly special but still fairly addictive.

### Primal Rage

(82: Recommended) Time Warner Interactive - Beat 'Em Up £39.99

*Jurassic Park* for psychopaths - yep, dinosaurs a-plenty, good gameplay and graphics. Should appeal to *Mortal Kombat* or *Street Fighter* fans.

## Issue 33 - December 1995

### Alien Odyssey

(77) Philips - Space Adventure Game £44.99

A sort of cross between *Bioforge* and *Cyberia*, with the odd *Star Wars* reference thrown in; overall a pretty adventure which plods a bit.

### Battle Isle 3: Shadow Of The Emperor

(93: Classic) Blue Byte - Strategy £45.99

The third and possibly final instalment of one of the most highly respected strategy games of all time. Certainly worth checking out if you like your strategy futuristic.

### Comanche Vs Werewolf

(88: Recommended) Novalogic/ US Gold - Helicopter Flight Sim £39.99

The sequel takes the original game and chucks in a completely new one as well for good measure. Maybe not the best helicopter flight sim around, but it still has plenty to recommend it.

### Crusader

(91: Classic) Electronic Arts - Blast 'Em Up £49.99  
Action, adventure, people getting their heads blown off - bloody excellent.

### Destruction Derby

(90: Classic) Sony Interactive - Racing Game £44.99

The PlayStation game where you can smash yourself and others to pieces comes to the PC... Plenty of network options, five different ways to play, superb graphics - need we say more?

### FIFA '96

(84: Recommended) Electronic Arts - Sport £44.99

If you already own last year's *FIFA* and you quite like it, it's worth buying this one. But if you want a simple and easy to control system look elsewhere.

### Mortal Kombat 3

(90: Classic) GT Interactive - Beat 'Em Up £44.99

This is the best two-dimensional beat 'em up you'll find anywhere right now. Make damn sure you enjoy it while it lasts.



(Right) *Alone in the Dark 3*: More Carny, cobwebs, murder, mystery and mayhem.

(Far right) *Command & Conquer*: A case of Cannon Fodder meets *Dune 2*.



## Navy Strike

(90: Classic) Empire Interactive – Naval Simulation £44.99

Actually two games in one: a flight sim and a military command sim. In it you pilot a jet fighter in the future – you'll find that once the atmosphere kicks in you're hooked.

## Phantasmagoria

(50) Sierra – Adventure £49.99

Without doubt a brave effort (spanning seven CDs) but sadly the interactive part is a bit ambitious. It looks good but that's about it.

## Road Warrior

(61) Gametek – Driving Game £39.99

The sequel to *Quarantine* is unfortunately nothing to write home about, despite the good graphics.

## Screamer

(89: Recommended) VIE – Driving Game £29.99

Stunning looking super speedy arcade racer with six different tracks, six different cars (manual or auto) and three different skill levels. Very arcadey indeed.

## Worms

(84: Recommended) Ocean – Strategy £34.99

*Worms* is what you get if you cross *Lemmings* with *Cannon Fodder*. Four people can play at once, there's lots of weapons and features, and the levels are generated afresh each time you play – good fun.

## Witchaven

(88: Recommended) US Gold – Arcade/Role-Playing Game £29.99

*Witchaven* is packed with lots of spells and potions to play with, the usual network/modem options, triggers and traps, impressive graphical effects – and if you're looking for gore you've found it. Sick, twisted and violent – we like it.

Issue 34 – January 1996

## Actua Soccer

(92: Classic) Gremlin Interactive – Sport £TBC

Ranking alongside *Command & Conquer* as the office favourite at the moment, this is currently the best football game on the PC thanks to excellent gameplay and a fantastic 3D polygonised pitch arrangement – sorry FIFA and Sensi, but you'll have to step aside.

## Entomorph

(78) Mindscape – Role-Playing Game £44.99

If you've already got a copy of *Ultima VII* and fancy something similar in style, *Entomorph* is worth a look. It's got a fairly engrossing storyline, although the presentation is somewhat lacklustre.

## Fighter Duel

(65) Philips Media – Flight Sim £39.99

There's very little to say about this game as there's actually very little to it – don't expect it to keep you rivetted to the screen; even what little scenery there is is dull.

## F1 Grand Prix Manager

(85: Recommended) MicroProse – Racing £44.99

One of the most imaginative management simulations around – certainly the best Grand Prix one available, but then it's the only one.

## Frankenstein: Through The Eyes Of The Monster

(79) Interplay – Adventure £44.99

Starring Tim Curry, this is an excellent gothic adventure. The puzzles are challenging, the storyline is cleverly structured, the visuals are sumptuous, but sadly it's hampered by a dodgy interface which makes it difficult to navigate your way through the locations.

## IndyCar 2

(90: Classic) Papyrus/Virgin – Racing £34.99

Polygontastic with absolutely glorious SVGA graphics. If you already own *IndyCar 1*, hold out for *F1GP2* instead. But if you don't, buy this one. Oh, but if we're really honest here, you ought to try to afford *F1GP2* as well.

## Mortal Koll

(50) Vic Tokai/Virgin – Strategic Shoot 'Em Up £34.99

Is this yet another *Doom* clone? It basically involves loads of shooting everything you see from a 3D perspective. A great idea on paper, but it's let down by poor graphics and voiceovers (even with the dubious talents of Dani Behr) – you may well prefer *Hexen*.

## Pinball World

(77) 21st Century Entertainment – Pinball £44.99

For some reason there seems to be more pinball and football games coming out than you could possibly want, and although you've got a choice of table layouts (which you don't really need anyway) it doesn't really offer anything markedly different.

## Pro Pinball: The Web

(90: Classic) Empire Interactive – Pinball £34.99

Don't discount this game simply because it only features one table – it's positively packed with features, you can see the table in its entirety or from six different viewpoints, it's realistic (you can nudge the table from either side as well as the bottom), and it's got a totally stonking soundtrack.

## Rebel Assault II

(90: Classic) LucasArts/VIE – Shoot 'Em Up £49.99

If you can't see what all the fuss about *Star Wars* is about or you didn't like the original *Rebel Assault*, chances are you won't like this one. On the other hand, if you're a die-hard Empire/Rebel fan and spend your nights re-enacting scenes between Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader, you'll love it. Of course solid action, 'real' live action bits, bloody gorgeous graphics and a corking storyline go some way to recommend it as well.

## Sensible World Of Soccer

(60) Warner Interactive – Sport £39.99

We waited a long time for this one. It's got some management bits, some nice rendered cut-scenes and commentary, but it's still not a patch on *Actua Soccer*.

## Stonekeep

(76) Interplay – Role-Playing Game £44.99

It looks a bit dated (mainly because it's flick-screen), but in its favour it has a nice, easy to handle control method, a wide variety of levels to keep you interested and a very thoughtful experience system which allows your character(s) to become more skilled with their weapons the more they use them.

## Su27 Flanker

(95: Classic) Mindscape – Flight Sim £44.99

Developed by Russian pilots, this is all about one of the scariest aircraft ever built. It's no lightweight 'hop in and pole around the sky' type product, but unfortunately it's let down by a lack of network or serial link multi-play facility. If you want a comparison it's better than *F2000*, *MiG29* and *Tornado*.

## The Dig

(87: Recommended) LucasArts/VIE – Adventure Game £44.99

Another offering touched by the hand of Spielberg. It's a proper adventure with a proper story, a cut above your usual sci-fi adventure stuff. And it's got great music.

## Tilt

(80: Recommended) Virgin Interactive – Pinball £TBC

You get six tables to choose from (including *Monster*, *Funfair*, *Gangster*, *Sci-Fi*, *Myst* and *Majik*). It doesn't have the depth of the single table in *The Web*, but it's good all the same.

## Williams Arcade Classics

(90: Classic) GT Interactive – Various £29.99

Worth buying for an arcade-perfect version of *Defender* alone, this '80s compilation also includes *Robotron 2084*, *StarGate Defender 2*, *Joust*, *Bubbles* and *Sinistar*. The graphics obviously aren't too hot given the age of the titles, but don't hold that against it.

## WipeOut

(78) Sony Interactive – Racing £44.99

Winging its way directly from the PlayStation, this game of anti-gravity racing with floating cars seems to have lost something in the conversion; play it on anything other than a Pentium and you can kiss the PC version's smoothness and graphical details goodbye. Top marks for the brilliant soundtrack though.

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## Battleground Ardenne

(84: Recommended) Empire Interactive – Wargame £40 (TBC)

One for the serious strategy heads among you – hex-wargaming finally gets updated for the '90s. (NB: You'll need Windows 95 to play it.)

## Beavis and Butt-head

(87: Recommended) Viacom New Media – Point-and-click Adventure £39.99

Fans of the gruesome twosome will love this game (but avoid it if you're not as it's unlikely to appeal). Plenty of puzzle solving and a hilarious script – it's like being in control of your very own *Beavis and Butt-head* episode.

## Extreme Pinball

(65) Electronic Arts – Pinball Game £39.99

So what did our reviewer make of the 'proper' version of *Epic Pinball*? He had one word for it: "Aaaaarrrggghh!" If you're after a top quality pinball game, buy *Pro Pinball: The Web* instead.

## Quest For Fame

(80: Recommended) IBM – Music RPG £49.95

Air guitar rules! Pick up the plastic plectrum and join Aerosmith for a riff extravaganza as you try to make it from unknown musician to mega rock 'n' roll star – if you succeed you get to play with the band themselves!

## Terminator: Future Shock

(85: Recommended) VIE – Strategic Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

The third title in the *Terminator* series, this has plenty of action and atmosphere, as well as one of the best 3D engines around.

## The 11th Hour

(67) Trilobyte/VIE – Adventure/Puzzle Game £TBC

The sequel to *The 7th Guest* has been a long time coming – unfortunately it wasn't really worth the wait. It's not much different either, apart from the addition of a 'treasure hunt' challenge. But then if you really, really like puzzles you may find it pretty playable.

## The Hive

(78) Funsoft UK – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

A pre-rendered blastathon which is a bit like *Rebel Assault*, only without the good bits.

## This Means War!

(89: Recommended) MicroProse – Strategy Wargame £44.99

Strategy, action and lots of futuristic stuff, a sort of *Command & Conquer* meets *Transport Tycoon*. It's slower than *C&C*, but the options once you've got to grips with all the options.

## Virtua Fighter Remix

(89: Recommended) Sega/Datrotech – Beat 'Em Up

*Evaries*, bundled with *Diamond Edge* graphics card. Bloody stunning visuals with excellent detail on the players – but in the gameplay stakes it doesn't quite match up to *Mortal Kombat 3* or *StreetFighter II Turbo*.

## Virtual Karts

(71) MicroProse – Arcade Racing Game £TBC

MicroProse have cleverly applied the word 'virtual' to the title – but don't ask why, 'cos the karts don't handle like karts and the hires graphics are jerk-tastic.

## William Shatner's TekWar

(58) Capstone/US Gold – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

A *Doom* clone we reckon you could probably quite happily live without... (Sorry Will!)

## Wing Commander IV

(85: Recommended) Origin/Electronic Arts – Space Combat Sim £TBC

The filmed sequences apparently cost over eight million dollars – and it shows, they really are impressive. Unfortunately though, despite a genuinely interesting plot, a strong storyline and the fact that *WCIV* is the most cinematic gaming experience you'll find, the gameplay's seriously lacking. You'll also need a mighty meaty PC to play it on.

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## Absolute Zero

(70) Domark – Space Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

Don't even consider attempting *Absolute Zero* unless your PC's got a serious amount of spare hard disk space – our reviewer found that it needed 20MB just to have the menu running at optimum performance! It's a bit of a shame really, as it could have been an entertaining variation on the *Wing Commander/Elite* genre: it's got loads of ground-based missions, various different characters, fairly complex mission objectives, SVGA spaceships, alien monsties, a big plot twist... but it's also got bland scenery and a disappointing frame rate. To sum up, it's *Wing Commander* on the rocks.

## Civilization 2

(90: Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99

This is basically an enhanced version of the first game, but this time round the combat's been tightened up and plenty of new units and advances have been added, as well as 'hit points' – even die-hard fans of the original will find that there's a lot to learn. Of course the biggest difference is that *Civ 2* is completely 3D – although moving up a perspective can make things a bit cluttered and hard to follow at times, especially if you use the option to have multiple windows open at once. (NB: Windows 95 or 3.1 with WinG required.)

## Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2

(60) Core Design – Helicopter Sim £TBC

The Sega CD helicopter blaster gets updated for the PC – although we're not really sure why they bothered. Although it's got arcade-style controls it's even less realistic than most games of its type, and it's totally spoilt by a haphazard viewpoint – one minute the sky's empty, the next you've got something right in front of you. Even worse, targets that you lock onto can vanish from sight as you fire. This means you end up shooting from a stationary position, making you more vulnerable to attack and, basically, ruining the game.

## Formula One Grand Prix 2

(95: Classic) MicroProse – Racing £44.99

Our reviewer called this an absolute masterpiece – even the menu screens, sub menus, pre-race options and set-up screens can keep you happily occupied for ages. If you want to have all the options and textures in their full glory you'll need a Pentium, but even in low-res it still looks bloody great. The attention to detail is simply amazing thanks to Geoff Crammond's perfectionism, and the physics of the game engine are just outstanding – give up your social life now!

## Police Quest: SWAT

(83: Recommended) Sierra – Adventure £49.99

Daryl Gates makes a welcome return with what has to be the best game in the *Police Quest* series. It's a different and enjoyable twist on the traditional adventure game – the only thing holding it back from a classic rating is a lack of compatibility with a light gun.

## Rayman

(76) UbiSoft – Platform Game £TBC

Direct from the Sony PlayStation come cutesy Disney-esque sprites, silky smooth parallax scrolling and colourful backgrounds spread over a massive 68 levels; however, there aren't any especially clever puzzles or particularly taxing levels, just nice graphics and a steady learning curve that veers from easy-peasy to bloody annoying. Sorry *Rayman*, but despite the high standard of presentation, you're ultimately a bit limited and pretty linear.

## The Beast Within: Gabriel Knight 2

(88: Recommended) Sierra – Adventure £44.99

Admittedly *The Beast Within* isn't perhaps the most difficult game you'll ever play, but as an interactive movie it's brilliant. The acting is great, the FMV scenes contribute beautifully to the atmosphere and the plot gets increasingly complex and engrossing. Excellent!

## Time Gate

(84: Recommended) Infogrames – Arcade Adventure £44.99

From the team that brought us *Alone In The Dark* comes something that looks like erm... *Alone In The Dark*, but set way, way back in the days of the Knights Templar. However, there are some annoying inconsistencies: downright infuriating puzzles, items that are impossible to pick up, and the fact that it's easy to miss things – and on top of that you'll find yourself saving furiously as you go simply because you keep getting brutally killed when you least expect it. But if you like *ATD*, you'll like this as it's almost exactly the same – which is also the reason we haven't given it a higher score. **Warcraft 2: Tides Of Darkness** (82: Recommended) Zlabac – Strategy £44.99 Despite a dodgy AI *Warcraft 2* is very addictive and enjoyable – and it's even better still if you can take advantage of the multi-player option and play over a network. All in all, a definite 'must-buy' for anyone who liked the original.





**Windows 95 comes in for its ritual monthly kicking while others display a delight in vicarious murder. What fun.**

### GLAMOUR AND GLITZ

I'd just like to say that *Command & Conquer* is one of my all time favourite games, but why oh why are there so few missions, and why is the computer AI soooo stupid? Westwood have a totally brilliant game on their hands and yet the number of missions simply shows a lack of imagination. Why couldn't they be bothered to do a mission builder?

Also, I have this horrible vision of the future if Hollywood (or a similar bunch of cretins) should get their hooks into our industry. The production of games will no doubt end up being controlled by a bunch of accountants and a load of politically correct loonies that want to tell you what to think. Games will end up all glitz and no substance and with about as much depth as a coffee stain. If they get what they want we'll end up with games about ethnic, gay, single-parent social workers where you have to petition the local council for improved wheelchair access to the local disabled refugee farm... or something.

(Below) For once the mighty *Command & Conquer* comes in for a bit of criticism...

I know you'll say I'm stereotyping but what if it happens? Games like *Command & Conquer*, *X-Wing* and *Doom* will be no more than happy memories.

**Ian Birbeck, Crook, Co. Durham**

To be honest, Hollywood is fast becoming in charge of our industry and has been for some time – and if the film industry doesn't already have its teeth sunk in, the music industry is having a good go. Most of this is due mainly to the fact that the games industry as a whole is now more powerful financially than the music biz. Okay, it doesn't have the same credibility, but it's worth more dosh... and that's all that seems to count to the big companies. Look at the portfolio of companies that are already involved: BMG, CIC (who own a major stake in Interplay), Paramount (who have major links with Spectrum Holobyte), Viacom, Sony... the list goes on and on.

The glitz has already arrived, and if you look at a lot of product that is being released at the moment, part of your prophecy of doom is already coming true. Apart from *Quest For Fame*, what 'classic' games have we seen from BMG? They've been around for two years now and have hardly made a huge impact on our industry. No doubt this will change, but for the time being the 'true' software companies are the only ones who are producing good stuff. The only exception

## Write to PC Zone

There are numerous ways to transmit your delightful scrawlings to the bods at *PC Zone*. You can either use the traditional method, often described as 'snail-mail' by the pretentious technocrats of this world...

**WordProcessor**

**PC Zone**

**Dennis Publishing**

**19 Bolsover Street**

**London**

**W1P 7HJ**

Or you can be really hip, trendy and cyber and do a whacky e-mail thing...

**CompuServe: PC ZONE 100142, 2152**

**CIX: PCZONE@CIX.compulink.co.uk**

to the rule as far as 'big entertainment companies' seems to be Virgin, who have shown a commitment to games software for many years. The only guarantee we have that you are over-reacting a little is the fact that the teams and producers still have a lot of power over their product. LucasArts, though licensed to many distributors around the world (Virgin, Funsoft and so on) still have complete control over the content of their games. Again with Westwood – although they are owned by Virgin, the fact that they are a large, influential team means that they have almost complete autonomy over the content of their games.

### NERF HERDER

I am writing to you from a galaxy far, far away, not a long time ago. While on my intergalactic travels I managed to pick up a copy of *Wing Commander* and the *Star Wars* games, and I must admit that I've become a bit of a fan. Recently though, I've become more than a little distressed. I've been found slumped on the floor unconscious after making the jump to hyperspace two times now, and I feel that it is almost certainly because of a shock related condition caused by Mr Charlie Brooker in your February issue of *PC Zone*.

How can that uncultured Nerf Herder possibly justify giving a game of *Wing IV*'s calibre a mere 85% when even *Beavis And Butt-head* clocked up a score of 87% in the same issue? Any game in the *Wing Commander* series should be given 90% plus, called a classic and put on a pedestal to be worshipped by all. *WCIII* is now acknowledged as a benchmark by which other games are judged. Its follow-up can't be that bad, can it?

As *X-Wing* fades into oblivion, you'd have thought that LucasArts would get into the interactive movie thing in the







same way that Origin have. Not your Rebel Assault stuff... oh no. Something like *Wing Commander* perhaps?

I don't generally moan, but don't you think that *Wing Commander IV* was overly scorched a little?

#### A Grieving *Wing Commander* fan

Part of the problem with the series of *Wing Commander* games is that far too much emphasis has been placed on the FMV elements of the product. While the video footage in WCIV is extremely impressive, the game itself appears to have been hardly touched. To the casual observer, if either WCIII or WCIV was playing on a machine in the corner of the room, I reckon they'd be hard pushed to tell which one it actually was.

The reason that Charlie only gave WCIV 85% (which is nevertheless a respectable score, and makes it more than worthy for our recommended accolade) is that none of the problems we complained of in WCIII have been rectified – all of the niggles are still there. If you look back to our review of WCIII way back in our February 1995 issue, you'll find that we made the same complaints back then as Charlie did in his WCIV review. This just isn't good enough, games have to progress and improve,

#### GET YOUR TIPS OUT

I have recently been impressed with the quality of releases such as *C&C*, *Warcraft 2*, *Hexen* and *Fade To Black*, all of which are compelling and obviously take some time to complete. The only unfortunate feature is that you reach a certain point and then can't get any further, and this can occur at any stage in the game. Take *Fade To Black* for example;

I'm sure you'll agree that it's a classic, but when you get to the fifth level it becomes nearly impossible. Why don't software houses include some kind of tips facility on the CD along with the game? As long as it was a separate file that you just loaded into Windows or whatever it wouldn't matter, as you wouldn't just stop the game every five minutes to check what to do.

#### Shaun Whiteman, Lincs

I don't think that we're ever likely to see this really happening. Okay, some games have training modes, but the view of many developers is that games are designed to be a challenge. By the fifth level it is thought that you are proficient enough to attack some of the more taxing challenges that a game can provide. The closest we will get to this kind of on-line help will be literally that On-Line help where you call the software house BBS or Website and check out some tips from there.

#### YAWN

Ha, hah, hah! I, Satan, Lord of the Underw...

Yeah, thanks... piss off.

(Above) The *Wing Commander* crew pretend to look the other way as the 'PC Zone Scoring Debate' continues.

(Below) *Fade To Black* an "impossible classic"? Come on – fending off monsters like these isn't supposed to be easy!

#### VICARIOUS MURDER? GULP

Remember your December cover? Well I'm afraid that the gratuitous image emblazoned across it failed to attract my attention. Nor did it attract the attention of my 15 year-old daughter who shares my enthusiasm for vicarious murder and WordProcessor. Nobody I showed the magazine to paid any attention to it whatsoever. Bearing in mind that I have (without enthusiasm, I might add) been virtually celibate for the last couple of years, I still have no trouble avoiding serial killer mode when faced with a glossy picture of a bra. I am forced to decide whether it is myself or the rest of the population that is perverse. Frankly, I would conclude that anyone in whom a picture of half a woman with only half her clothes on invokes any feelings more intense than those suffered from, say, lift music, should rake through the contents of their psyche before making speculative announcements about the motivations and psychological attributes of others.

#### G Birkbeck, Eastleigh, Hants

She... er, shares your enthusiasm for vicarious murder? You both like to imagine what it's like murdering people? Er... hello. Let's hope it just stays vicarious, eh? Yes, well, thank you for your comments







### INFERIOR POWER

I've got a little bit of money to spend on upgrading my system. At the moment I have a DX2/66 and while this was more than adequate a year ago, it's now far from being the shit-hot beast that it was. What do you reckon I should do? Is it worth installing a super graphics card, or should I opt for a new processor? With games such as *Quake* and *Duke Nukem 3D* coming out this year I feel that I should do something soon.

**Damon Halt, Clevedon**

It's probably worth going for some kind of Pentium now, and on a new motherboard if you can afford one. The new 3D graphics cards will become a standard, but not for a year or so when everything has settled down. At the moment you just require something powerful with the potential to be upgraded. Intel, in its infinite wisdom, have recently raised the stakes yet again by introducing the P166, thus effectively making the P100 their entry-level chip. It's only a matter of months before this trickles down to effect firstly the machines that go to retail, and then the software that is developed. Before the end of the year we'll see games where the absolute minimum spec is a P90 with 16Mb. Pretty scary, huh? Maybe it's time for you to sell your grandmother, or girlfriend, or mother... or something.

### IS QUAKE QUAP?

All this talk of *Quake* over the past few months leads me to believe that everyone is expecting some wunderkind of the games world. What on earth are we all going to do if *Quake* turns out to be a load of Quap?

**B Turnbull, Hunts**

We'll all hang our heads and mourn the passing of the great white hope of interactive entertainment. *Quake* is possibly the single most important product to be released this year. Let's just hope it's not Quap, eh? From what we've seen and heard, there's a good chance that it won't be.

### WINDOWS 95 IS CRAP... part one

I feel that I just have to write to you to vent my extreme hatred of Windows 95. Having bought a P90 with 8MB of RAM and a whopper of a hard drive, I was naturally quite keen to get down to playing some hot PC games. However,

(Left) Everyone's holding their breath for the arrival of *Duke Nukem 3D*... as well as squeezing the last pennies out of their wallets to buy a super fast PC to play it on...

my brand spanking new wonder box came with Windows 95 pre-installed. I had no choice in this... it just did. And what a load of old shite it is too!

I use a PC at work, along with 'old' Windows, and in the moments where I've managed to sneak a game onto the system, it seems to have worked fine (and the work machine is only a P60). On my machine at home though, it seems to have a disturbing tendency to just stop for a minute or so, seemingly doing absolutely bugger all. What the fuck is it doing? Is my machine broken, or are all the rumours that Windows 95 is just a steaming pile of shit true?

**Ed Davies, Kent**

It seems that the big gag among all people that use Windows 95 is the fact that it's so incredibly bloody slow. It's not supposed to be, but apparently one of the big factors in this is memory. For ages I've been using Windows 95 with 8Mb of RAM and had just got used to the fact that my machine ran so slowly - but seeing a machine running under 16Mb was a revelation. There's a guy upstairs in this building who has 64Mb and that's almost dream-like! The main problem is that Windows 95 spends all its time trying to be very clever and fancy, and all of this takes up valuable memory. So, having upgraded from 4Mb to 8Mb, it looks like we're all going to have to double up yet again.

### WINDOWS 95 IS CRAP... part two

I recently 'upgraded' my machine to Windows 95 in an attempt to make sure that I was taking full advantage of the 32-bit power of my PC... and whatever other bollocks Microsoft seem to think that this may achieve. So far I have only noted a decrease in the efficiency of my PC, and I think I shall be upgrading to DOS 6.2 and Windows 3.11 again in the near future.

**T Ewing, Middx**

For the next three or four months you'd probably be better off, but it's not going to be long before 90% of products are developed specifically for Windows 95. Unfortunately,

much like the way we have no control over the fact that games require increasingly powerful processors, we also have no control over the operating system that we use if we want to play the latest ones. 1996 will be the year that Windows 95 blossoms. The big softies are developing specifically for it and all of the bolt-on bits such as DirectX and Direct3D are going to make a huge difference. Whether we like it or not, we're all going to have to go for it eventually.

### WINDOWS 95 IS CRAP... part three

I could offer to turn up with four like-minded friends to remake the scene in *Die Hard* when Bruce Willis walks on broken glass and does an impromptu Tarzan impression with a fire hose (but choose your own hero, as in our version the bad guys will win). But since this is the real world, it hardly seems worth all the effort (plus your office probably isn't that tall and besides, I can't do a convincing German accent).

My point is that here in the real world, there are surely very few gamers who are prepared to install Windows 95 plus another 4MB of RAM simply to make their PCs run a little bit quicker than a somnambulant giant sloth, when all they want to do is play a simple little game that would have hammered along in DOS. I would be very surprised if any gamers have actually shelled out £180 for Windows 95, as most people that own it only do so because it came bundled with their new machine.

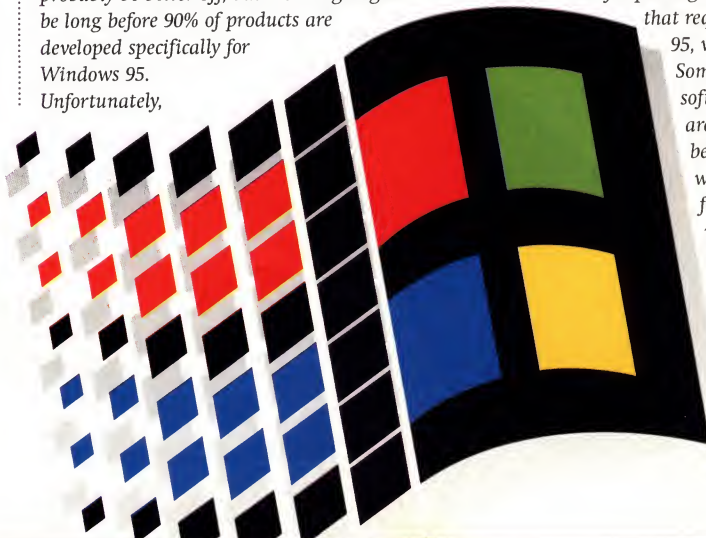
It seems logical to me that you could prevent aggravation just by putting a logo on games that require Windows 95.

**Derek Watts, Altrincham**

Not quite sure what all that stuff at the beginning is all about, but, er... I'm sure you do. Anyway, you have a point, but as I said above, whether we like it or not, there will come a point where we'll all have to use it if we want to make use of the latest software.

As for putting a logo on games that require Windows

95, we do already. Sometimes the software houses are unclear about it before release, but whenever we know for certain when we go to press, we always make sure we put a Windows 95 logo on the review or blueprint. **Z**





# Culky Says

Win! Win! Win! ...with my special Gum Oil

**D**EAR ENGLAND, Alright? Culky here isn't it, from my lovely aunt Nora's house in Mexico, but not for much longer, I'm legging it back to London soon isn't it. My mad half-brother Kevin's in a spot of bother with the old law and that. He hates them so much, he's become one,

or at least he thinks he has! (See him on the next cover disc - Ed.)

Anyway, I hope you're tucking in to Culky's Chocolate and Ketchup Bake, what I showed you how to make in last month's issue and that. In my last letter I said I'd send a copy of my CV, and old Culkus never doesn't send his CV when he implied he would of done, so I is.

Show my CV to anyone you reckon'll land old Colin some 'nice-paper'. (Cash - Ed.)

If you get me fixed up, you'll win the painting of my mum what I done in the cover disc, it's an abstract you know... real quality art! (Actual size 12"x14".) So it's WIN! WIN! WIN! with Culky!

My aunt reckons I've gone a bit 'spongy' isn't it, she reckons my mates in London are all gutless lemon-knuckles, and that's why I'm legging it back to England, to cuddle up in front of the fire, with all my soft spongy mates. But I told her I'm not racing back to play girls' games with marshmallow boys, I'm starting Culky's Community Corner, the agony column in PC Zone, giving tips on tricky court cases and that. I explained that we 'Culks' didn't get our family motto for nothing and that I, Colin Culk of Feltham, will live up to it!

So, if you're in trouble with the Bill, just send in the charge sheet or summons, and old Culky will choose one of his 'judicial remedies'... they ain't never failed me so they won't never fail you nither!... trust Colin.

Culky could for instance:

**A** Explain to the prosecution that I will now be your lawyer, and will need to see the charge sheet for a few seconds, to 'check' it. Then I'll explain to the court that I have a rare gum disorder, and it's just 'flared up' again, so I'll have to go to the toilet to put on some of my special 'gum oil' that I got

on prescription from one of London's top gum clinics. When I'm in the bogs I'll get out my special tube! ...That gum oil I was talking about is actually Tipp-Ex! And I'll 'amend' the charge sheet in our favour. The 'Mr' of the text will become 'Mrs', I'll run back into court and go to the judge: "Geez!... Geez!... Mr Judge sir!... Over here, your worship-fulness!... there's no case! My client doesn't have an 'innie', he's got an 'outie'! (He's a man, not a woman - Ed.) The Bill have grabbed the wrong gender!... case dismissed!... WIN! WIN! WIN! with Colin!

**B** Tell the judge I'm dropping the case!

**C** I'll guarantee to publish the charge sheet in PC Zone, under the 'Protection of citizens act 1996', and explain to the

judge that your case has got lots of people looking at it (Culky means it's attracted considerable publicity - Ed.) so he'll have to throw the case out of court.

**D** Hide in the County Court car park, behind a hedge or small car, and wait for the judge to come out after work,

and when he comes out of his court in his wig and that, go... "Oiy... your Judgehood!... Come on then your Worshipfulness, have a go, go on! I dare ya your Hoodmanship! Come on, stick a chin piston on mi food engine, ya Lord-fulnessness!... Scared is it?... You ain't nothing but a Judge and that! Isn't it."

**E** Tear out the Culky's Certificate of Innocence form at the bottom of the page, fill in your details, and take it to the court on the day of your case.

If things are going really bad and it looks like you're gonna get the hammer, ask the Judge if you can come forward to the bench for a bit of 'kakkle'. Show his Rightwing-hoodship the completed form right in his boat!... that'll do 'im I reckon. So, if you're

in trouble with the old Bill, let me know.

Anyway, I've been 'helping out' PC Zone now for about 365 days, so I've decided to issue my own Culky's Commemoration Stamps.

I got me a top-notch designer from Sidcup to design them; I valued them at £4 each, so you can use them for nearly anything you want to post and that.

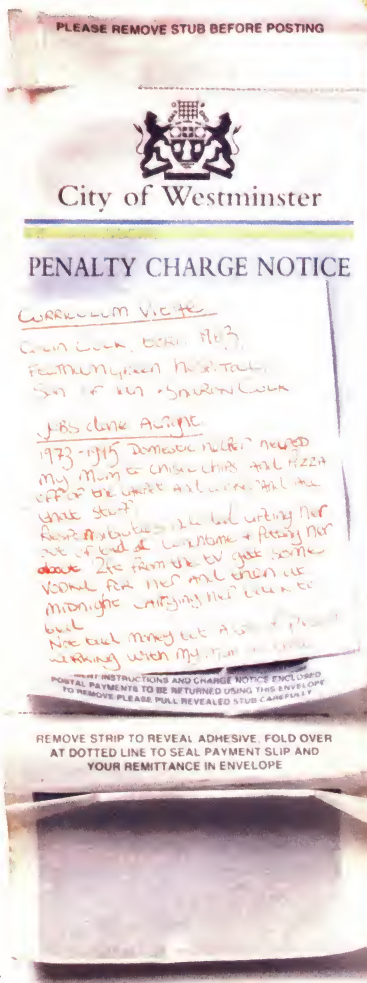
And before you ask... don't... it's all sorted. I went round to the Post Office Tower and spoke to a mate of mine in the sorting room and that. He said if he sees any he'll honour them. So I'm giving away a whole strip of my special stamps on this page...

It's WIN! WIN! WIN! with Culkus!

Shit, I can hear my aunt screaming again, she needs a drink! I've got to go now, but I'll be writing from home next month, by my telly and that, and I'll catch Kevin and get him on video for the next cover disc!

Nora just said thanks for the mail. Catchhurz later gezzwahs!

Cheers!... Culky. **Z**



## CULKY'S CERTIFICATE OF INNOCENCE

Name ..... Date .....

Alleged crime ..... Court .....

Colin Culk hereby instructs the judge to deliver a NOT GUILTY verdict.  
Court to pay costs.





**W**E'RE EXISTING 'NOW', RIGHT? You're reading these words, and suddenly it's 'now' again. A second has just passed and yet, amazingly, it's suddenly 'now' once more. And again! And again! And again!

Primary school philosophy. I know, but you've got to ask yourself this one nevertheless: just how often does 'now' update itself? Which brings me to my point, and to illustrate it, I'm going to cite a fictional game called... er, let's go for *SpaceWar 9*, shall we? It comes on a million CDs and the cast includes Leonard Nimoy, Jeff Goldblum, and, erm, Annabel Giles. I feel a court case scenario coming on...

**Judge:** *SpaceWar 9*, you are charged on four counts of 'not furthering the art of computer games'. How do you plead?

**SpaceWar 9:** Not guilty, your honour.

**Judge:** In that case I call the counsel for the prosecution.

**Prosecution:** Thank you, m'lud.

(A hush falls over the proceedings.)

**Prosecution:** *SpaceWar 9*, to open with an admittedly vulgar question, can I ask you how much it cost to, er, make you?

**SpaceWar 9:** (Fibbing.) I'm not too sure of the actual figure.

**Prosecution:** A rough estimate will do.

**SpaceWar 9:** Well, um, it might have been as little as nine million dollars.

**Prosecution:** Or even as high as 15 million?

## He's afraid of... the people in charge of the future, and time

**SpaceWar 9:** (Silence. A shrug.)

**Prosecution:** Yes, it's a lot of money. And I should imagine that Annabel Giles' fee carved a hefty chunk out of that.

**SpaceWar 9:** Eh? But she only cost two hundred bucks! She'd have dressed up as Patrick Moore for half that! She was desperate! She even said she'd... Oh, I get it. You're being 'ironic'.

**Prosecution:** Whatever. But Jeff Goldblum and Leonard Nimoy?

**SpaceWar 9:** Aaah! I see where you're coming from. And it's not what you're thinking, as it happens... they both badly needed the work. Jeff cost \$60,000, and Leonard \$75,000 (the extra 15 grand was for his *Star Trek* connection, which looks good on the packaging). Oh, and the numerous 'extras' cost zip, pretty much, before you ask. The main money – if you're interested – went on the sets. And they were *real* sets, not computer generated. I really can't emphasise that enough. And the director! And all the costumes, of course. And we had to film everything four times, don't forget, what with the different endings and so on. We even had a 'gaffer' and a 'best boy'. And a sandwich lady. We even paid someone to dig a hole! The credits roll for ages. They look brilliant!

**Prosecution:** So you honestly feel that the end result of the movie was worth the initial monetary outlay? Grotesque as some might feel the figures are?

**SpaceWar 9:** (Obnoxiously.) You're obviously out of touch. By the end of the year I reckon that *Waterworld*-style budgets will be commonplace: Costner was just a tad before his time. Hike the price up at the cinemas, make sure some of the characters are fluffy, and then go full-pedal bonkers on the PG merchandising deals: posters, lunch boxes, duvets, felt-pen sets, candy. The whole route!

**Prosecution:** So you say. But let me just suggest to you for a moment that you're not a movie – you're a computer game.

**SpaceWar 9:** Aaaaah! But I thought you...

**Defence:** Objection, objection, m'lud. My client wasn't ready for that sudden, although obvious, change of stance in the questioning.

**Judge:** Objection sustained.

(There is a murmur from the public gallery. It's quickly quelled by the judge, who allows *SpaceWar 9* an interval of an hour in which to gather its thoughts. The prosecution then continues, on a slightly different tack.)

**Prosecution:** *SpaceWar 9*. The fully interactive space combat sections between your, er, 'movie', were written on which computer?

**SpaceWar 9:** A Cray Seven Trillion.

**Prosecution:** So you're saying manpower wasn't squandered willy nilly in the ridiculous pursuit of hyper-efficient new code routines and the like?

**SpaceWar 9:** I'm not sure I follow you.

**Prosecution:** Then let me elaborate, and this is simply a suggestion. Your 'game engine' is much the same as it always was. An equation comes to mind: *Last year's software + this year's hardware = a bit of spare processor time in which to + some extra texture-mapping and still = the speed of last year's product.*

**SpaceWar 9:** Which I do perfectly well, so what's the gripe? What exactly are you getting at? And what's wrong with up to date hardware? You're playing with words!

**Prosecution:** Not at all. And it's not the hardware that's on trial, it's you – the software. For instance, if I were to take a high speed film of you in operation, and then play it back at the standard rate, would you look – shall we say – 'jerky'?

**SpaceWar 9:** But of course I would. Who wouldn't? Everyone would! You can't get me for that! I'm an American! You can't blame me for the fact that we've all got top kit while you guys haven't!

**Prosecution:** And I wouldn't try to; as I said, that isn't my point. But what would be happening 'between' these jerks? On this high speed film? Even on a 'top' computer? An American one?

**SpaceWar 9:** Eh? Nothing, obviously. Er, apart from some AI maybe?

**Defence:** (Sensing danger.) M'lud, my most learned friend seems to have skirted off on an unexpected tangent, and appears to be about to unwittingly enter a conceptual framework which may possibly have its foundations firmly embedded in complete fantasy. However... I am naturally obliged, in the best interests of my client, to request an adjournment. I need to visit the library.

**Judge:** Very well. In that case the court will reconvene exactly one month from today. I apologise profusely to those members in the public gallery who prefer these sorts of things to be sewn up in a single hearing, but the fact of the matter is that the page is about to end! May the court rise. **Z**

# SPACE WAR 9





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